THE CANADIAN MODEL FOREST NETWORK

MODEL FOREST NETWORK
RÉSEAU DE FORÊTS MODÈLES

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FIRST NATION PARTICIPATION IN CANADA'S MODEL FOREST PROGRAM 1992-1997:

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A REPORT PREPARED FOR
THE ENHANCED ABORIGINAL INVOLVEMENT
INITIATIVE OF
CANADA'S MODEL FOREST PROGRAM

CANADIAN FOREST SERVICE
NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA

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Canada's Model Forest Program:

Partners for Sustainable Forest Management

In 1992, the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) launched Canada's Model Forest Program. The program openly invited Canadians with an interest in the future of our forests to work together in partnership to develop model forests as examples of leading-edge sustainable forest management (SFM) practices.

Several important strategic initiatives were identified as a result of the evaluation of Phase I (1992-1997) of the program, including such themes as increased stakeholder involvement, communication and knowledge transfer. During Phase II (1997-2002), the Canadian Model Forest Network, now composed of 11 model forests and the Secretariat based at CFS, will further develop these initiatives to work toward the implementation of SFM, at home and abroad.

The Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative (EAISI) supports and enhances the participation of aboriginal (First Nation, non-status Indian and Métis) groups and organizations currently active partners of, or living within or in close proximity to, Canada's model forests. It seeks to incorporate traditional and contemporary aboriginal knowledge into the ongoing model forest goals and objectives. Where appropriate, the EAISI also assists in the development of market based/economic opportunities for some or all forest resources under consideration, including timber and non-timber products, services and benefits.

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This review has also benefited from observations, perspectives and focuses contained in the rich and instructive reports published by the National Aboriginal Forestry Association, identified in the bibliography to this report. For this, the authors owe a debt of gratitude to Harry Bombay, Executive Director of the Association; Janet Pronovost, Office Administrator; and its dedicated staff.

The views, conclusions and recommendations in this report are those of the authors. As such, they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Canadian Forest Service or those of the individual model forests or other forestry associations.

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Executive Summary

This report seeks to review the degree of First Nation participation in Phase I of Canada's Model Forest Program (CMFP), to identify program gaps and accomplishments, and to indicate new opportunities for enhanced participation by First Nations in Phase II of the Program. First Nation participation is assessed on the basis of their involvement on the Board of Directors and Advisory Committees of the model forests, from grassroots or community participation, and from the proportion of CMFP 1992-1997 allocation devoted to projects and other initiatives sponsored by and involving First Nations. This review has indicated that, during the first phase of CMFP, the degree of participation ranged from total at some model forest sites (Long Beach, Prince Albert and Eastern Ontario), to no participation at some sites (Bas-Saint-Laurent, Fundy and Western Newfoundland), and mixed levels of participation at others (McGregor, Manitoba, Lake Abitibi and Foothills). Despite the significant variations in the degree of participation, the accomplishments of CMFP in terms of First Nation participation have been quite substantial. Significant accomplishments in Phase I include the solid partnerships developed among formerly unfriendly groups with differing perspectives, attitudes, interests and aspirations, which did not have any history of working together. They also include the willingness and disposition of hitherto unfriendly groups to test their capability and readiness to make decisions in their common interest. Moreover, these accomplishments involve the in-depth ecological knowledge that has been developed, improved understanding of the forest ecosystem, its processes and dynamics, as well as a commitment to sustainable development. In addition, these accomplishments are reflected in the national and international linkages created in pursuit of sustainable development and in the bridges built among communities that have had a long history of conflict and mistrust.

Among the gaps identified in the 1992-1997 Program is the limited success in securing a higher degree of First Nation participation in the work of Canada's Model Forest Program at particular sites in Canada. While varying reasons have been cited for this limited success, the over-riding reason for this is the apprehension of some First Nations to participate actively in an innovative public program that, for the first

time, provides specifically for their involvement in the decision-making process; the lingering mistrust that exists between First Nations and private and public sector firms and agencies; the perception that the Program merely maintains the status quo in resource management; the perception that First Nations have a minority position in the process of decision-making; the intransigence in the official position taken by some First Nations and their misperceptions of the mandate and responsibility of CMFP. It also reflects a lack of awareness and probably interest in what the model forest and First Nations have and can offer to each other in the pursuit of sustainable development.

By its very definition, sustainable development implies that current economic and social disparities between First Nation and non-First Nation communities cannot continue. The concept of sustainable development signifies that complementary and concurrent research should be undertaken in the ecological, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. This entails the development of a comprehensive knowledge base in all three dimensions. With very few exceptions, the major focus of the first phase of the Program at some sites across Canada was on the development of a solid ecological knowledge base. The existing state of knowledge on the subject was limited, and, understandably, priority was assigned to enriching the knowledge and to filling in the gaps in ecological knowledge bases where they existed. However, the enormity of this task, the limitations in funding and the late commencement of operations at some sites resulted in relatively limited attention to both the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development at many model forest sites.

Nevertheless, this in no way suggests that sustainable development should be viewed as a partial concept. It is an aggregative concept that involves the development of a comprehensive knowledge base on the factors, processes and dynamics of the forest ecosystem. It also requires an in-depth knowledge of the ecological, economic and social dimensions. Decisions and policies developed with respect to sustainable development are, in fact, made to ensure that the needs and expectations of present and future generations are met. Surely, these decisions and policies are not made to grow trees simply as monuments to the scientific achievements of humanity. If this were the case, sustainable development would lose its meaning and significance. In effect, balancing the ecological, social and economic considerations of sustainable development in a holistic or integrated way remains a gap in Phase I of the Program, and an opportunity exists to address this in Phase II.

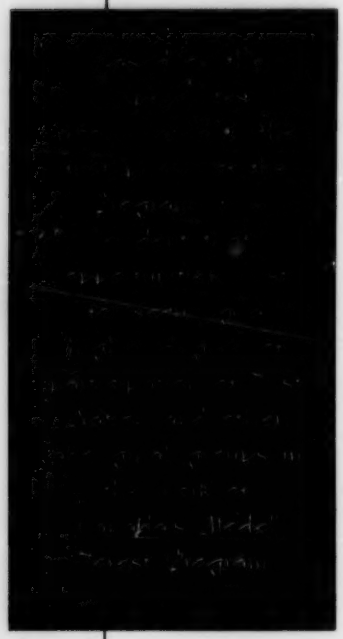
In the pursuit of sustainable development, forest-dependent First Nation and other communities are integral parts of the over-all forest landscape.

As such, the values and uses, traditional ecological knowledge, economic and social circumstances that impact on their lives and perspectives and aspirations of these communities need to be integrated into the sustainable development decision-making process. As has been the case in the research of the ecological dimension, comparable research needs to be undertaken in both the economic and social factors, processes, circumstances and dynamics that impact on the lives of these communities. The results of this research should also be integrated into the decision-making process.

This represents a challenge to Phase II of Canada's Model Forest Program. It is also an opportunity to address program gaps at some model forest sites. It is obvious that a focus on the economic and social considerations would stimulate a higher degree of First Nation participation in the Program. This review has identified several new opportunities that could contribute to the enhancement of such participation. In this regard, the newly established Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative (EAISI) is a worthwhile complementary component to CMFP that would also contribute to a higher degree of First Nation participation. To illustrate: sustainable development connotes the capability of the forest resource to meet the needs of present and future generations. It is prudent, therefore, to have greater participation of First Nation youth in the Program at the various sites across Canada. Invariably, youth maintains a profound consciousness of the need to enhance the capability of the forest resource to meet the needs of future generations. The positive features of increased youth involvement are that it would promote the integration of First Nation traditional ecological knowledge and modern scientific knowledge in forest management and that it would also stimulate greater First Nation grassroots or community involvement in CMFP.

Thus, the participation of First Nation and Aboriginal communities in Canada's Model Forest Program has emerged as an important consideration in its implementation. What is interesting about the Program in the various model forest sites across Canada is the diversity, variations in vision, mission statements and priorities in response to regional circumstances and perspectives. The variations reflect the differences in the spirit of accommodation, perspectives, attitudes, apprehension and historical relationships with governments and private sector firms, understanding of the mandate and purpose of

Canada's Model Forest Program, and the extent of the perception that the model forest focuses on First Nation interests, values and circumstances, as well as their projections of the benefits of participation. Undoubtedly, the variations also reflect the differences in the perception of what constitutes a valid partnership, sustainable development, mechanisms of accountability and equity in representation on the Model Forest Board of Directors and Advisory Committees. Moreover, participation was also found to be dependent on the extent to which the concept of sustainable development has adequately been explained to First Nations and the advantages and merits understood from the perspective of First Nation and aboriginal communities.



Based on the experiences accumulated in the first phase of the Program, it is evident that opportunities exist for securing a higher degree of participation by First Nations and other aboriginal groups in the work of Canada's Model Forest Program. Pursuit of this goal, however, would benefit significantly from an appreciation of the potential contributions that First Nations can make to the achievement of sustainable development. This entails a profound change in attitude in dealing with First Nations and other aboriginal groups. Participation is not intended to compromise First Nation land claims or established treaty rights. Pursuit of a higher degree of participation by First Nations and other aboriginal groups should be based on mutual respect, dignity, transparency of model forest operations, devotion of adequate time, patience, and the legitimacy of First Nations and other aboriginal communities as part of the broader forest landscape. In fact, at model forest sites where some First Nations hold perceptions of inequities, paternalism, insensitivities, disrespect for differing values, traditions and cultures, as well as inequitable representation in the decision-making process, their willingness or zeal to participate actively in the Program has grown "stone cold." However, as mutuality of interests, benefits and costs of participation, accommodation, respect and trust is a two-dimensional process, First Nations, then, need to reconcile their views and expectations to the specific purpose, mandate, goals and objectives of Canada's Model Forest Program, which ought not to be held hostage to the pursuit of outstanding land claims or other political objectives.

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List of Acronyms

BSLMF – Bas-Saint-Laurent Model Forest

EOMF – Eastern Ontario Model Forest

FHMF – Foothills Model Forest

FMF – Fundy Model Forest

LAMF – Lake Abitibi Model Forest

LBMF – Long Beach Model Forest

McMF – McGregor Model Forest

MBMF – Manitoba Model Forest

PAMF – Prince Albert Model Forest

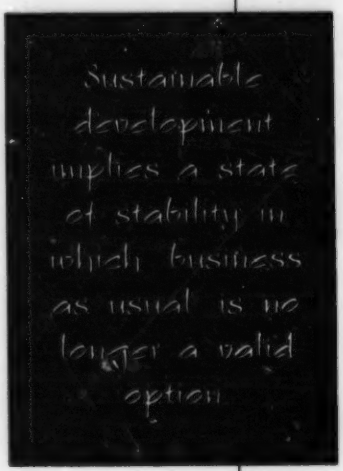
WNMF – Western Newfoundland Model Forest

Canada's Model Forest Program

Canada's Model Forest Program (CMFP) has emerged from Canada's "*Green Plan for a Healthy Environment.*" Its purpose is to accelerate change in forest management from sustained yield to sustainable development. The technique adopted to induce this change in 1992 was the creation of ten (10) model forests across Canada based on the formation of partnerships representing the diversity of interests, benefits, values and uses of the forest resource. This technique is also used to assist partners in reaching consensus on a vision for the future of the forests. The test of sustainable development lies in the capability of the forest resource to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising its capability to meet those of future generations. Sustainable development involves concepts of "needs" to which priority is assigned and "limitations" imposed by the state of technology and social regime on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (Gros Morne Declaration: Assessing Rapid Environmental Change, IISD Net, 1997). Sustainable development restores and safeguards ecological systems and their processes, up-grades economic efficiency and improves the social well-being of the community. It contains two fundamental notions. The first is that of sustainability, which is a condition towards the achievement of which human beings strive. The second is that of development, which involves the process of change needed to achieve it (Weichel, 1994).[1] Sustainable development implies a state of stability in which "*business as usual*" is no longer a valid option. This process involves the development of effective stakeholder partnerships in decision-making and communications that would ensure that CMFP successfully challenges conventional wisdom in the pursuit of sustainable development.

The specific objectives established for Canada's Model Forest Program were:

- to accelerate the implementation of sustainable development in the practice of forestry, in particular the concept of integrated resource management;
- to apply new and innovative approaches, procedures, techniques and concepts in the management of forests; and
- to test and demonstrate best sustainable forestry practices utilizing advanced technology and forestry practices available.



The concept of sustainable development is all inclusive in its implementation. Hence, as integral parts of the broader forest landscape, First Nation communities, including recognition of their rights and land titles, identity, culture, perspectives, traditional ecological knowledge, values, benefits, uses and aspirations, should be acknowledged and integrated into the forest management decision-making process. On conceptual grounds, therefore, it is desirable that First Nations participate meaningfully in CMFP. On practical grounds, there are reasons for ensuring First Nation participation 0in the Program. First Nations are not simply another stakeholder in the forest resource. They were the original custodians of the forest resource (National Aboriginal Forestry Association, 1995). Moreover, the Canadian courts have identified First Nations rights as

1 Selected notes from an address by Bert Weichel to: SUSTAINABLE FORESTS SYMPOSIUM; sponsored by Prince Albert Model Forest Association and Canadian Institute of Forestry. Held in Prince Albert, SK., 1994,02.28 - 03.01.

"drawing from Indians' historic occupation and possession of their tribal land" (Geurin referenced in NAFA Position Paper, 1995).

Other reasons justify First Nation participation in CMFP. Among these are the following (NAFA, Position Paper, 1995):

- First Nations are the original stewards of the forest resources in Canada. They should, therefore, not be viewed as just another stakeholder.
- The courts have recognized Aboriginal rights as "deriving from the Indians historic occupation and possession of their tribal lands." Their treaty and other rights enjoy constitutional protection.
- First Nation's interests in the forest are tied to the historical, legal, economic, political and cultural circumstances that have emerged long before their contact with European traders.
- First Nations have traditionally developed a unique bond with the land and its forest resources, and they have perhaps developed the strongest cultural and spiritual attachment to the forest. It represents their home and history.

The forest remains the cornerstone of First Nation traditional subsistence economy and culture. They have developed the following wide range of values and uses of the forest:

- First Nation's' willingness to share their traditional forest-based ecological knowledge, and to benefit from the modern scientific knowledge that emerges from the implementation of CMFP; (This represents an important accommodation and recognition of the high quality of the research undertaken in the Program, and of the contributions of modern science to forest management.)
- The desire of First Nations to protect their "inherent rights" to forests and resources both on and off reserves;
- First Nations' aspirations to assume forest management responsibilities and to assume a meaningful role in forest jurisdiction;
- First Nations view the forest as the resource base on which they can address their priorities of creating employment and income opportunities, establishing business ventures and increasing their participation in value-added processing of forest products; and
- New opportunities for First Nation participation are emerging in Canada's Model Forest Program.

Phase I of Canada's Model Forest Program ended March 31, 1997, and owing to its initial success and promise of further successes, it has been extended for another five years until the year 2002. Volumes have been written both nationally and globally about Canada's Model Forest Program. Reports on the value and promise, as a valid approach to sustainable development, have captured the imagination and zeal of several other countries that now have model forests within their territories with substantial assistance from the Government of Canada. There is, however, little information on the degree of First Nation participation in CMFP as an essential consideration in pursuit of sustainable development. The inclusive nature of sustainable development suggests that the success of the Program will ultimately depend on the degree of First Nation participation in its implementation. Moreover, the Brundtland Report and the World Commission on Environment and Development identified the potential contributions that Aboriginal Peoples and their accumulated knowledge and experience could make in the pursuit of the visionary ideal of sustainable development and greater integration of resource management. The Brundtland Report noted that aboriginal communities are indeed "repositories of vast accumulations of traditional knowledge and experience" that can contribute to the acceleration of the progress of sustainable development. It has also noted that:

"Indigenous peoples and their communities...have a vital role in environment management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices. States should recognize and duly support their identity, culture and interests and enable their effective participation in the achievement of sustainable development."

In its statement on the unique perspective of First Nations, the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers in 1992 established the following principles with respect to First Nation participation in sustainable development (Strategic Direction Number Seven):

- Forest management in Canada should recognize and make provision for the rights of Aboriginal Peoples who rely on forests for their livelihood, community structure and cultural identity.
- Self-sufficiency of First Nation communities through economic development requires increased access to resources, business and the preservation of traditional activities.
- First Nations have an important and integral role in planning and managing forest resources within areas of traditional use.
- A stable environment for long-term, sustainable forest management requires a cooperative resolution of land claims and aboriginal self-government in an honourable, fair and timely way.

In addition, the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers has laid out the following ingredients of Canada's "framework for action" towards sustainable development:

- Increase involvement of First Nations in forest land management;
- Ensure the recognition of First Nations and treaty rights in forest management;
- Increase forest-based economic opportunities for First Nations.

From the perspective of First Nations, Canada's Model Forest Program is unique and progressive. It represents a major public sector forest program that provides specifically for meaningful participation by First Nations in the decision-making process for forest resource management. The purpose of this review is to examine the degree of First Nation participation in the Program; review accomplishments and identify gaps and new opportunities for First Nation participation in the Program so that they might be addressed in Phase II. Moreover, the complementary Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative (EAISI), which has recently been established, seeks to increase the degree of First Nation participation in CMFP as recommended by the World Commission on Environment and Development and the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers.

First Nation Participation

This report examines the degree of First Nation and other aboriginal groups' participation in the individual model forest activities at the various sites across Canada. It seeks to document progress and accomplishments with respect to First Nation participation, to identify programming gaps and to assess new opportunities for greater First Nation participation through supplementary funding from the EAISI and by any and all other means available.

In order to give practical effect to the concept of sustainable development, the Government of Canada, through the Canadian Forest Service, established a network of ten model forests through a national competitive process across the five major eco-regions of Canada, which was not restricted to these eco-regions. Taken together, the ten model forests involve almost six million hectares of forest land, or 1.4% of Canada's 417.6 million hectares of forests, and embrace some 250 groups. Each model forest site represents a working scale model of sustainable forest management and is managed by a partnership of stakeholders and interest groups relating to the model forest in question. This network of model forests reflects a diversity of cultural and ecological values, including wildlife, biodiversity,

watersheds, recreation, traditional values and uses, as well as the economic value of the wood supply.

The model forest sites selected in 1992 were:

- Western Newfoundland Model Forest, Corner Brook, Newfoundland
- Fundy Model Forest, Sussex, New Brunswick
- Bas-Saint-Laurent Model Forest, Rimouski, Quebec
- Eastern Ontario Model Forest, Kemptville, Ontario
- Lake Abitibi Model Forest, Iroquois Falls, Ontario
- Manitoba Model Forest, Pine Falls, Manitoba
- Prince Albert Model Forest, north of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan
- Foothills Model Forest, Hinton, Alberta
- McGregor Model Forest near Prince George, British Columbia
- Long Beach Model Forest, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

An interesting thing about Canada's Model Forest Program is its diversity, regional circumstances, priorities and approaches. This is evident in:

- the specific organizations and interest groups involved;
- the way in which each partnership and Board of Directors is developed and structured;
- the vision, goals, objectives and programs developed and implemented;
- the issues and priorities addressed;
- the perception of sustainable development; and
- the extent to which contemporary and complementary initiatives are undertaken in the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Assessment of First Nation Participation

First Nations have participated in seven (7) of the ten (10) model forests created during the first phase of the Program (1992-1997). The three (3) sites where there was little or no First Nation participation were Bas-Saint-Laurent in Rimouski, Quebec; Fundy in Sussex, New Brunswick; and Western Newfoundland in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. Efforts are now underway at most of the sites to encourage greater First Nation participation in the model forests during the second phase of CMFP. This report assesses participation from the perspectives of:

- decision-making process (Board of Directors)
- Advisory Committees
- the grassroots or community level
- level of funding in support of First Nation projects/initiatives.

The degree of First Nation participation in each of the model forest sites is examined below.

Western Newfoundland Model Forest

The Western Newfoundland Model Forest (WNMF) covers an area of some 923,000 hectares, which is of commercial importance in that it represents a major source of timber supply for two of Newfoundland's three newsprint mills. Approximately 35,000 people live within the boundaries of this model forest; this area is used as a source of wood supply and other timber for domestic use by residents and also has protected areas that are the source of water for 13 communities (Canadian Model Forest Network Secretariat, 1994-95).[2]

This model forest partnership provides a forum to facilitate discussion, exchange and the resolution of conflicts through an integrated forest resource decision-making process that focuses on all aspects of resource management and an all inclusive spectrum of resource values, benefits and uses.

This process is based on the guiding principle of "*.... shared decision-making, a high degree of coordination and cooperation, and a recognition of the legitimacy of all interests.*"[3]

First Nation Participation

There was no participation by First Nations in the programs and activities of this model forest during Phase I of its operations. This was due essentially to a lack of awareness of, and interest in, what the WNMF and the MicMac First Nations had to offer and make available to each other.[4] However, this model forest would welcome First Nation participation in the second phase of its operations, 1997-2002. With the focus of the model forest's planning process on both timber and non-timber resource value and uses, opportunities now exist to seek the participation of the MicMac and Innu First Nations in the work of the Western Newfoundland Model Forest.

This process is based on the guiding principle of shared decision-making, a high degree of coordination and cooperation, and a recognition of the legitimacy of all interests

2 *Loc. cit.*

3 *Loc. cit.*

4 Personal communication with Jim Taylor, General Manager, WNMF, March 17, 1998.

Fundy Model Forest

The Fundy Model Forest (FMF) covers an area of 419,300 hectares of Acadian forest. It is located near Sussex in southern New Brunswick within reach of the province's three major urban areas of Fredericton, St. John and Moncton. Included in its partnership are representatives of the forest industry, research organizations, municipal organizations, educational groups, ecotourism groups, environmental organizations, professional groups, woodlot operators and Fundy National Park. It pursues the vision of safeguarding the ecological sustainability of the forest resource while concurrently sustaining the economic and social values and benefits provided by the forest resource. This involves a thorough appreciation of the factors and dynamics of the forest ecosystem, as well as a solid knowledge base that would provide the underpinnings of a comprehensive forest landscape management system (G. Parker, 1996).

First Nation Participation

During the first phase of its operation, there was no First Nation participation in the partnership of this model forest. However, with supplemental support from the Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative, FMF is planning to seek First Nation participation in its work during the second phase of the Program.

Bas-Saint-Laurent Model Forest

The Bas-Saint-Laurent Model Forest (BSLMF), which is also referred to as "An Inhabited Model Forest of Sustainable Development," covers an area of approximately 113,100 hectares in the Lower St. Lawrence Region of Quebec. The objective of this initiative is to demonstrate that communities can develop partnerships to participate in integrated forest resource management. The partnerships consist mainly of large and small private forest holdings whose proprietors seek to demonstrate that the varied private forests, through the development of partnerships, can sustain a dynamic rural economy while preserving the integrity of the natural ecosystem. In the pursuit of this objective, this model forest has been testing two distinct forest management formulae; viz., forest management and joint management on three different territorial units.

First Nation Participation

BSLMF would welcome the participation of First Nations in its programs and activities. However, there was no such participation during the first phase of this Program and none is planned for the second phase inasmuch as there are no First Nation communities within or in the immediate vicinity of BSLMF. The creation of the Waswanipi Cree Model Forest in northern Quebec could provide a mechanism for incorporating First Nation perspectives, values, knowledge and uses in Phase II of Canada's Model forest Program and could provide opportunities for collaboration between Bas-Saint-Laurent and Waswanipi.

Eastern Ontario Model Forest

The Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF) consists of 1,536,522 hectares of land situated within the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Forest Region. It includes the territory of the Mohawk First Nation of Akwesasne. It has a wide range of ecosystems, economic and social attributes and land uses that reflect the nature of the soil and the long history of land use in the area. It is estimated that about one million people live in, or adjacent to, the model forest in urban areas, including the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton and rural communities. The vision of this model forest for Phase I of its operation was "to champion the concept and practice of sustainable forest management for all its values in eastern Ontario through the cooperative efforts of its residents and supporters." Membership in the model forest is open "to any corporation, business, government, organization, group, association or individual that is resident, owns and/or conducts forest related business within the area of the EOMF" subject to the payment of a membership fee of $15.00 per annum.

Members of the Board of Directors are either appointed or elected by the membership. The Constitution provides that the Board shall consist of one appointed representative from each of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Canadian Forest Service, Domtar Specialty Fine Papers, and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. The remaining six members are elected from among the membership. The Board elects annually a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer from among its members who become the officers of the EOMF. In addition, the model forest has attracted partners with a wide array of interests and backgrounds. The number of partners grew from the original 23 at the commencement of operations to well over 100 at the conclusion of Phase I. Decisions within the Board are made by consensus on traditional Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) principles of respect, equity and empowerment.

First Nation Participation

Since its initial development and commencement of operations, First Nations have always participated in the evolution of the EOMF. In particular, this participation has been at the following levels:

1) Board of Directors

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is among the founding members of this model forest and has assisted in the development and signing of the original proposal for the establishment of the EOMF. In fact, the Constitution of the model forest provides that one of the permanently appointed seats on the Board of Directors is reserved for the representative of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. The high degree of First Nation participation is attributed to the foresight, wisdom and understanding of the mandate of the Program by the Akwesasne Mohawk Council. Henry Lickers, Director, and Mr. Richard David, Assistant Director, Department of the Environment, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, made substantial contributions in the implementation of the model forest concept in eastern Ontario.

First Nations have perceived the model forest as a unique opportunity for them to work—in collaboration with federal and provincial agencies, private sector firms and other forest resource stakeholders and interest groups within the model forest partnership, broader membership and Board of Directors—on concerns, problems and issues of mutual interests. The model forest has developed an effective forum for communication and dialogue between traditionally unfriendly organizations and groups that have had virtually no experience in working together. For example, based on an overlap and contradictions in their

jurisdictions, agendas and responsibilities, poor communication and distrust have long existed among the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, Domtar Specialty Fine Paper Ltd. and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Since the formation of the model forest, these three groups have formed solid working relationships and are now referred to as "the unholy alliance" by some. The forum for open dialogue and compromise provided by the model forest has now become a beacon of hope for bridging the gaps between these three organizations. In their new roles and responsibilities as equal partners in the model forest, they are required to focus essentially on the merits and functions of the model forest, and not those of their parent organizations. Positive linkages and lines of communications between these three groups have been improved significantly through the efforts of Henry Lickers.

The ideal of the Zeal to Deal is also of essence in solidifying relationships between potential partners. The three elements that are fundamental to the successful partnership process are respect, equity and empowerment

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has made major contributions to the model forest by sharing with it its philosophical and conceptual framework of the organization, planning and decision-making phases in the development of the model forest (Story and Lickers, 1997).[5] This framework has provided the building blocks for facilitating a partnership according to the naturalized knowledge of the Iroquois First Nation. It has also contributed to the development of the underpinning and the working relationships of people and organizations according to tools developed and practised by the First Nations of eastern Ontario.

The tools involve the inclusion of each partner in the EOMF as a full partnership based on the "Zeal to Deal" ethic, which is the cornerstone of traditional community relationships building developed by the Iroquois nation. The "Zeal to Deal" is a process of solidifying working relationships between partners and potential partners. In this process decision-making is by consensus or mutual agreement rather than by a vote system. It represents the most powerful concept in First Nation traditional knowledge taught to the model forest (Story and Lickers, 1997). It rests on the proposition that "cooperation is the only way to survive." The ideal of the "Zeal to Deal" is also of essence in solidifying relationships between potential partners. The three elements that are fundamental to the successful partnership process are respect, equity and empowerment.

In embracing the "Zeal to Deal" concept of decision-making, this eliminates the need for specifying the number of Board Members that constitute a quorum. It embodies the concept of "all present at a given meeting is a quorum" (Barkley et al, 1997).[6] In these circumstances failure to reach unanimity is considered as a failure of the system. This rejection of the conventional requirement of a quorum for board decision-making is in sharp contrast to established industrialized organizational practice of balancing power structures and of ensuring that the decision-making body is controlled by balanced participation such that the position of each member is mitigated by the positions of other members.

2) Advisory Committees, Members and Partners

First Nations participate at all levels of the organization. They have one (1) of ten (10) seats on the Board of Directors, participate in both the membership and partnership of the model forest, and are well represented on

5 Story, P.A. and Lickers, F. H., ***Partnership Building for Sustainable Development: A First Nation Perspective from Ontario.*** Co-published simultaneously in Journal of Sustainable Forestry (Food Products Press, an imprint of the Haworth Press, Inc.,) Vol 4, No. 3/4 1997, pp. 149-162; and: Sustainable Forests: Global Challenges and Local Solutions (ed: O. Thomas Bouman, and David G. Brand) Food Products Press, an imprint of the Haworth Press, Inc., 1997, pp. 149-162.

6 Barkley, Brian et al, ***The Eastern Ontario Model Forest: Acting locally, connecting globally,*** The Forestry Chronicle, Nov./Dec. 1997, Vol. 73, No. 6.

most of the following technical committees that perform advisory functions to the model forest: Forest Science Committee, Public Information and Education Committee; Finance and Operations Committee; Integrated Resource Management (IRM) Project Committee; Calakmul Model Forest Committee (Mexico), Trails and Outdoor Education.

3) Community/Grassroots

There has also been significant First Nation participation at community and/or grassroots levels. In view of its proximity to the National Capital Region, the EOMF is often called upon to host visitors from around the world who wish to see the on-the-ground gains made in the implementation of sustainable forest development. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is often required to host these groups on behalf of the model forest. These visits have become a way of introducing to visitors and others awareness of the strong presence of First Nations in the model forest area, and have instilled in First Nations a sense of pride and accomplishment.

The model forest has also supported the Mohawk Council and other First Nation members of the model forest in tapping federal programs to get funding for youth development. Moreover, the Mohawk Council develops and submits project proposals like, for example, the white and black ash project, for funding by the model forest. The Mohawk Council then implements these projects. Consultants or other professionals retained for these projects are linked to the Mohawk Council, and not to the model forest. This builds trust and confidence between the Council and the model forest. Furthermore, the Mohawk Community of Akwesasne also assists in the model forest's initiatives in the Calakmul Model Forest in Mexico with which the EOMF was "twinned" in 1993.

Accomplishments, 1992-1997

Major accomplishments of the EOMF during Phase I (1992-1997) of CMFP are summarized below:

High Degree of First Nation Participation

In spite of the unresolved long-standing issues and problems that First Nations have had with public sector agencies and private sector firms and organizations, the model forest has successfully achieved the solid support and participation of First Nations at all levels of its organization. First Nations have also provided the model forest with the philosophical and conceptual basis of its partnership, organization and decision-making processes.

Community Awareness and Interaction

Prior to the establishment of the EOMF, there was little interaction between First Nation and other communities in the area. First Nations perceived that public agencies were more interested in managing their reserve than in managing the forest resources. As well, they were always in conflict with governments. Thus, the relations between governments and First Nations have been less than amicable. Through the efforts of the model forest and the Mohawk Council's "Zeal to Deal," solid linkages and mutual respect have emerged between the First Nation community, the model forest and the other members and partners in the model forest initiative. This has heightened the level of awareness, appreciation and understanding of the different cultural groups within and adjacent to the model forest area. The success of this initiative has been such that other First Nations, such as the Algonquin First Nation of Golden Lake, now seeks membership on the Board of Directors.

Membership and Partnerships

The EOMF has developed a solid membership and partnership of about 300 and 100 stakeholders, respectively, of various backgrounds, interests, agendas and perspectives. This diversity has contributed to the strength and accomplishments of the model forest. The lesson derived from this experience is that patience, time and persistence are indispensable in the attempt to develop good working relationships.

The exchange of information between members and partners has also contributed to the success and accomplishments of the model forest. Moreover, mutual sharing of knowledge, approaches to problems and operational processes have contributed to the forging of good relationships, the development of mutual trust, and respect for each other's views and perspectives. An example of this is that of the "Winter Woodlot Day," in which some 400 people participated. First Nation traditional prayers of thanksgiving were conducted at the opening and closing of festivities. Participants expressed their appreciation of this experience. This has created a better environment for higher degrees of First Nation participation in the model forest.

Henry Lickers addressing a group at the model forest

Integration of Naturalized First Nation Ecological Knowledge

A goal of the EOMF during the first phase of its operations was to integrate the best available knowledge into its activities. An important component of this process was the integration of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and the expansion of sources of such knowledge to include groups, individuals and projects that previously would have been only a minor consideration in such undertakings. The model forest has, through its Forest Science Committee, been successful in incorporating the best available knowledge into its activities, including the use of sources of traditional knowledge (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1996).[7]

Development of the Akwesasne Partnership Initiative

This is among the more significant accomplishments of this model forest. This multifaceted initiative has had an influence on all parts of the Program. Facets of this initiative range from education, information and awareness to the integration of First Nation mechanisms of decision-making and management based on the fundamental principles of respect, equity and empowerment. The characteristics and durability of this partnership have had a strong influence on the organization and management of the model forest's activities. EOMF projects can be divided into the elements of respect, equity and empowerment (Story and Lickers, 1997).[8]

In the continuing endeavour to promote the concepts and practices of sustainable development and integrated resource management, the following project activities were successfully undertaken in 1995-96 through the Akwesasne partnership (EOMF 1995-1996 Annual Report):

- black ash[9] plantations, collection of seed around the area and strengthening of the gene pool
- acquisition of GIS equipment and data collection
- location of research materials, maps and other resources
- planting of trees and shrubs on Cornwall Island - shoreline "softening"
- survival assessments of shoreline plantings
- outplanting of black ash seedlings in nurseries around the EOMF
- heritage forest inventories - comparison of past and present forests on island/mainland

7 *Op. Cit.*

8 *Op. Cit.*

9 Black ash is of interest to the basketmakers of Akwesasne as it is recognized for its strength and pliability. Its use in basketmaking is a tradition that has been passed on for many generations. The bark is used by First Nation to treat fever, and the bark and leaves are used as a laxative and diuretic, and to treat kidney and urinary infections (M.C.A. Traditional Medicines).

- woodlot management and safety training
- teaching of life skills on the land to youth
- development of signs and information for Ecological Reserve "Dickerson Island"
- planning for an educational/recreation trail system.

Other achievements of significance to First Nations within the model forest area include the following:

- report on traditional medicines (The Medicine Book)
- research report on birch bark resources and uses [i.e., canoe building] within the Algonquin community of the Golden Lake First Nation
- Kitigan Zibi Anishinabag summer student project: natural resources inventory of the area - traditional plants and uses
- cultural interactions between the Mohawk and the Algonquin First Nation, as well as other communities
- joint ventures between the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Domtar that have shown First Nation areas of black ash they did not know existed
- development of inventories of the islands and establishment of plots and rehabilitation of islands
- establishment of trails, medicine walks and a fish farm
- establishment and development of black ash plantations and the donation of several plantings annually
- procurement of a boat so that islands with forest can be visited and explored
- development of ecological reserve for red, blue and green heron.

International Linkages

Since 1993, the Eastern Ontario Model Forest Group has been involved in a number of international forest-based activities in which Canada's Model Forest Program has closely been involved in projects with First Nation communities. These activities have so developed in both diversity and depth that they involve a growing number of the groups and individuals, including First Nations, who have made major contributions in making this model forest work. For example, in 1993 this model forest developed an important partnership with the Calakmul Model Forest in Mexico. Through this "twinning" arrangement, there has been a mutual exchange of experiences and knowledge such that each partner has learned from the other. The knowledge and expertise shared relate to land, forest management, habitat conservation and agro forestry (Phase II Proposal submitted by the EOMF, 1997. Also, see Barkley *et al*).[10] This "twinning" arrangement involves working with the following four aboriginal groups in Mexico: the Mayas, Chol, Tzeltal and Tzotzio, at different levels of the Calakmul Model Forest.

Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne partnership, by virtue of its linkage and participation in the model forest, has been instrumental in the development of, and linkages to, the recently established Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative of Canada's Model Forest Program (Phase II).

Program Gaps and Opportunities

A review of the reports on the evaluations conducted by Hardy, Stevenson and Associates, 1996, as well as the evaluation of Canada's Model Forest Program (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd.), has identified a number of program gaps and opportunities that undoubtedly will be addressed in Phase II of CMFP (1997-2002). These include the following:

10 *Op. Cit.*

Expansion of Communications Focus

The communications focus of the EOMF could be extended to include the more external stakeholders and the general public. From the perspective of First Nations, this expansion should stress education, information and awareness of the significance of rebuilding the forest where resource depletion has been widespread. Communications should also stress the tangible benefits to communities of implementing sustainable forest development. This could be demonstrated in a user-friendly context on the ground. In addition, this expansion of the communications initiatives should also focus on the issue of special needs, such as the communication of particular forest life survival skills and expertise among the Mohawk and other First Nation communities such as Golden Lake.

Implementation of Practical Sustainable Forest Development Projects

In enhancing appreciation and understanding of the concept of sustainable development, projects should emphasize on the ground illustration of sustainability. These may include such considerations as:

- provision of user-friendly information to landowners on what constitutes sustainable forest development in relation to private forest management practices
- provision of public education and training through workshops and interpretive programs
- establishment of demonstration projects
- market development for primary and secondary products and services from EOMF, as well as assistance with the integration and coordination of markets for pulpwood, firewood, saw logs and other forest products.

This proposed initiative is intended to be perhaps among the most important dimension of the second phase of the EOMF.

Development of Local Criteria, Indicators and Monitoring System

The need has been identified for the EOMF to develop and refine local criteria and performance indicators of sustainable development compatible with those developed by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM). These CCFM criteria and local level indicators are intended to serve as local benchmarks and measures of progress towards sustainable development. These criteria and performance indicators should therefore reflect the unique bond that First Nations have with the land, as well as their perspectives, values, uses, circumstances and aspirations. In view of this, advice and input should be sought from First Nation communities in the development of local criteria and indicators so as to enhance their relevance and validity. Moreover, in this endeavour to measure progress and to support the work on criteria and indicators, a comprehensive information system or database would be required to monitor, review and evaluate progress towards sustainable forest development. It would seem preferable that these criteria and performance indicators be identified, developed and refined prior to the creation of an information system. From a cost perspective, this sequential process may be more effective.

Greater Youth Participation

As the concept of sustainable development also focuses on the ability of the forest resource to meet the needs of future generations, it would seem, as is the case at the other model forest sites, that the EOMF would benefit from greater participation by First Nation youth.

Economic and Social Development

Socio-economic development and employment creation have been identified as important considerations in eastern Ontario, particularly in First Nation communities. In addressing these issues, it would seem that the model forest has a unique opportunity to develop, in full cooperation with these First Nations, a socio-economic profile and a comprehensive socio-economic strategy. This

strategy could be based on an in-depth review and analysis of the socio-economic circumstances and future prospects for further growth and development in these communities. The development strategy should be grounded on initiatives that are culturally-oriented and compatible with the perspectives, values, aspirations and resource conservation ethics of First Nations.

Linkage Between Scientific Projects and User Needs

A singular accomplishment of the EOMF during the first phase of its operation is the understandably sharp ecological focus and impressive list of scientific projects and reports that has been generated. This knowledge base will serve as an indispensable building block of a sustainable development regime in eastern Ontario. To stimulate interest in, and the utility of, this knowledge foundation, stronger linkages could be established between the relevance and appropriateness of these scientific projects and user needs. Moreover, reports on these projects would benefit from their being published in a more user-friendly form. In addition, it seems appropriate that, wherever possible, these projects should be under the sponsorship of a user stakeholder group or organization, and the resulting report should be subject to a scientific review by peers.

Expansion of Membership and Partnerships

The influence and credibility of the EOMF would benefit from the development of its membership and partnership through a sharper focus on sustainable development at the landscape level and on the needs of other First Nations in the model forest, such as Golden Lake. A means of accomplishing this would be through greater communication and development of a greater knowledge base that indicates significant progress in sustainable development at the landscape level. In fact, the EOMF is increasingly earning a reputation as a place to develop new network links that can result in positive developments.

First Nations have always had an enduring interest in the forest landscape. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, by dint of the efforts of F. H. Lickers – its Director, Department of the Environment – as founding member of the EOMF, has been a committed partner in the development and promotion of sustainable forest development at the regional and national levels. Undoubtedly, an important focus and challenge to the EOMF would be to consolidate and strengthen this partnership in the promotion and explanation to other First Nation communities of the merits of sustainable development. A solid opportunity exists for the EOMF to work in close collaboration with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, federal and provincial governments and the private sector to develop opportunities for working in collaboration with other First Nations in forging further partnerships in sustainable development in the larger landscape.

Greater Participation in National Network

The challenges, achievements, experiences and opportunities of the EOMF are unique. These should be shared with other model forests so that they do not have to go through the time consuming process of "reinventing the wheel." This could be accomplished through increased EOMF participation in the Canadian and International Model Forest Networks which could facilitate the exchange of experiences and knowledge that can enhance the learning process in response to challenges of sustainable development. Given that an exchange is a two-way process, the EOMF could also learn from the experiences and approaches of other model forests that represent differing perspectives and approaches to the issues and challenges of sustainable forest development.

Lake Abitibi Model Forest

Lake Abitibi Model Forest (LAMF) covers an area of some 1.1 million hectares of boreal forest near Iroquois Falls and Cochrane in northeastern Ontario. It seeks to accelerate the implementation of integrated forest management with sustainability as its guiding principle through partnerships, communication and innovation. Through these mechanisms it attempts to balance the interests and values of the community with the productive capability of the forest resource. The model forest partnership consists of a large number of highly community oriented groups and organizations, including the Wahgoshig First Nation, private industry, provincial government representatives, Chamber of Commerce, recreation groups, town councils and the local school board. The model forest has established four program committees; viz., Eco-system Research, Information Systems and Technology Transfer, Socio-Economics, and Education and Communications. These committees consist of members of the Board of Directors and interested members of the public who oversee the development and implementation of projects.

First Nation Participation

At the start of this model forest, the Wahgoshig First Nation was allocated a seat on the Board of Directors, which was initially held by its representative Liz Babin, a hard-working leader in the community. However, due to a number of problems, including transportation, she has lately been unable to attend many of the board meetings. First Nations are also represented on the Socio-Economics Program Committee and on the Management Committee. During Phase I, the Wahgoshig First Nations participated in specific projects involving the community.

Accomplishments, 1992-1997

The specific projects in which the Wahgoshig First Nation participated during Phase I are as follows:

First Nation Resource Education

This $6,000 project funded by the LAMF contributed to the forestry education of two First Nation youth who were pursuing technical training at Sault College in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario over the period 1994-95.

First Nation Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Project

During 1996, the LAMF contributed about $295,034 to the development of the Cultural Heritage Site Project, which involved a partnership between the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Wahgoshig First Nation and the model forest. This project undertook archaeological field work in 1993-94 that recorded and documented 98 traditional sites, 23 European historical sites and 141 archaeological sites. Moreover, 35 potential heritage areas of concern were also identified, and a number of artifacts ranging from 200 to 6,000 years old were discovered. This project benefited from the knowledge of First Nation Elders in the documentation of traditional use sites.

Wahgoshig Forestry Project

Over the period 1996-97, the LAMF gave some $9,000 to the Wahgoshig Development Corporation's initiative to establish a forestry/silvicultural company. Abitibi-Consolidated, the forest industry partner in the model forest, made the area available for the new company to harvest.

Program Gaps and Opportunities

Program gaps identified in Phase I that provide opportunities for expansion during Phase II are as follows:

Increased Participation by First Nation

In addition to the Wahgoshig Community, there are other First Nations in the area that could be considered for partnership in the LAMF. For example, the New Post First Nation and the Moose Cree First Nation are believed to have some traditional land use area within the model forest. Moreover, the Tikpikogan First Nation, within Quebec, has historical ties with the Wahgoshig First Nation and could be invited to participate in the model forest. This would provide for a higher degree and diversification of First Nation participation in the LAMF.

Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative (EAISI)

This initiative could provide supplemental funding in support of the efforts of the LAMF for increasing the degree of First Nation participation in the model forest. As the Wahgoshig First Nation participates in the EAISI Working Group, it is anticipated that opportunities will also be identified and supported by this group.

Economic and Social Development

There are opportunities for this model forest to sponsor and fund research that would identify the economic, social and other developmental needs of the First Nation within and adjacent to the LAMF. That is to say, the research would develop socio-economic profiles of these communities that would set out their current economic and social circumstances, the strengths and weaknesses of the local economies, the challenges and opportunities of further development and the prospects for success. The research could also provide a basis for the creation of a strategic development plan. This requires collaboration between the model forest and the First Nation communities both within their mandates and priorities. This will stimulate opportunities for greater First Nation participation and development.

Development of Criteria and Performance Indicators

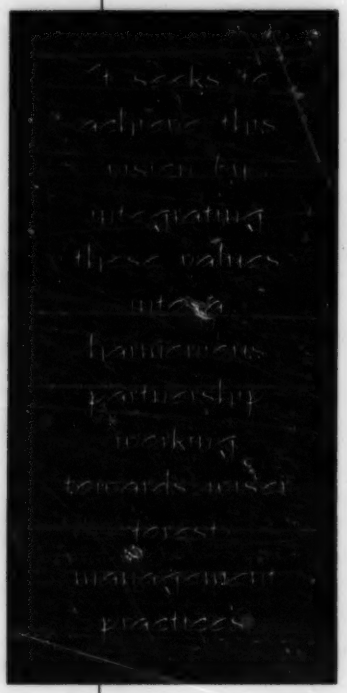
An important challenge that faces the model forest relates to the identification, development and refinement of local criteria and performance indicators to measure progress towards sustainable development. This also entails the development of a monitoring, review and evaluation system to record progress. Since First Nations have a unique bond with the land and its forests, a traditional value and use system, different perspectives, benefits and aspirations, these criteria and performance indicators should reflect these differences and uniqueness. An opportunity exists, therefore, for the model forest to collaborate with First Nations in the development of these criteria and indicators.

Aboriginal Community Development Impact Model

The LAMF has already proposed to three local First Nation groups the development of an Aboriginal Community Development Impact Model. Such a model has already been developed for Cochrane and Iroquois Falls and can be useful in forecasting the economic impacts of diverse programs and activities on communities. An opportunity exists for the model forest, in collaboration with First Nations, to generate funding support for both public and private sector agencies for participation in further economic and social development.

Manitoba Model Forest

The Manitoba Model Forest Inc., which is the parent organization of the Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF), was incorporated in 1992. Its Agreement with the Government of Canada for the establishment of the MBMF was signed on January 8, 1993. This model forest encompasses an area of 1,047,069 hectares. It includes the Pine Falls Paper Company Forest Management Licence, the Nopiming Provincial Park and part of the Atikaki Wilderness Park, as well as the reserve lands of the Sagkeeng, Hollow Water, Broken Head and the Little Black River First Nation and Forest Management Unit #23. Unit #23 encompasses the north end of the Agassiz Provincial Forest, the Belair and Brightstone Provincial Forests and the Grand Beach Provincial Park. It is home to several First Nations and several other communities with a combined population of some 15,000 people.



The MBMF, which is located about 100 kilometres to the northeast of Winnipeg, consists of several heritage sites, including ancient campsites, burial grounds and habitations. First Nations consider this model forest area to be important for their traditional subsistence activities of hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. Certain locations within the area are viewed by First Nations as being sacred in a spiritual and cultural sense. Other non-timber interests, values and use of the forest include tourism, wild rice production, mining and canoeing. In addition, there are some 4,600 privately owned cottages or seasonal residences and campgrounds in the area.

The long-term vision of the MBMF for Phase II has been changed to read *"To provide a place where people from different backgrounds can work together to learn about and appreciate all the values of the forest and help to ensure those values are conserved for future generations."* It seeks to achieve this vision by integrating these values into a harmonious partnership working towards wiser forest management practices. The practices are based on an improved understanding of Canada's and Manitoba's boreal forest ecosystem, their benefits, values and human impacts on them (The Manitou Abi Model Forest Proposal, 1992).

In pursuit of this vision, the MBMF implemented the following six (6) programs or activities: Integrated Resource Management; Advanced Forest Management Practices; Economic Development, Diversification and Efficiency; Education, Culture and Public Awareness; Technology Transfer; and an Aboriginal Specific Process.

First Nation Participation

This is reflected at the following levels:

1) Board of Directors

During Phase I of the MBMF, First Nation participation was essentially at the grassroots or community level. Initially, First Nations were allocated a seat on the Board of Directors but declined official participation. In addition, two seats were allocated to the Métis community to be appointed by the Manitoba Métis Federation. The four First Nations within the sphere of action of the MBMF are the Sagkeeng, Hollow Water, Little Black River, and Broken Head. Representatives of these First Nations had initially perceived the model forest initiative to be an innovative program and were invited to

participate in the decision-making process. In fact, the Sagkeeng First Nation, which is the largest in terms of population and influence, endorsed a Band Council Resolution entering the model forest partnership on February 25, 1992. George Munroe of this First Nation signed the model forest proposal representing First Nations as the other First Nation representatives did not show up for the partnership signing meeting.

At the organizing meeting held on July 17, 1992 representatives from Hollow Water, Little Black River and Sagkeeng First Nation attended, but at a follow-up organizational meeting on July 31, 1992 only the representative from the Sagkeeng First Nation attended. At an interim Board of Directors meeting on December 4, 1992, Eric Boyd was selected by the Sagkeeng First Nation, to represent First Nations, replacing George Munroe on the Board of Directors. Furthermore, at a meeting of the Board of Directors at the Sagkeeng First Nation Reserve on January 8, 1993, the Sagkeeng, Little Black River and Hollow Water First Nation Chiefs and council informed the Board of Directors that they could not support the structure of the Board of Directors. Instead the three chiefs asked for a downsizing of the Board, which would effectively have resulted in First Nations having 50% + 1 of the seats on the Board, excluding the two seats allocated to the Métis people.

In the continuing endeavour to get First Nations to take their seat on the Board of Directors, a review of the Board's structure was undertaken during January - February 1993. However, the official position of the Sagkeeng First Nation remained unchanged. As a result of this review, First Nations were awarded two (2) additional seats, increasing their number to three (3) from one. Nevertheless, the representative of the Sagkeeng First Nation formally resigned from the Board on November 29, 1993 citing, among other things, that the reason for his resignation is the refusal of the Board of Directors to accept the 50% plus 1 formula.

On October 25, 1994 the following three point proposal was received from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) for the development of a process that would enable First Nations to participate more fully in the MBMF:

- First Nations are eager to find a way acceptable to both themselves and the existing Board of Directors to fully participate in, and contribute to, the Program;
- The allocation of four Board seats to the four First Nations in the model forest area; and
- The establishment of an advisory group, operating in the same manner as existing advisory groups, to develop, evaluate and oversee programs of interest to First Nations within the overall objectives of the Program.

The Board thereafter amended its by-law to grant First Nations an additional seat, thereby increasing their representation to four (4) from three (3) seats, but required more discussions on the creation of a separate advisory group. Even so, at a meeting of two directors and the General Manager of the Manitoba Model Forest with the Chiefs and councillors from Hollow Water and Sagkeeng First Nations, the Chiefs reiterated the position of 50% plus 1 seats would be required for First Nation participation. Negotiations on participation are ongoing. At a meeting of the South East Development Council of the General Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in Winnipeg early in 1998, representatives of the Little Black River, Broken Head and Hollow Water First Nations identified the following five major issues they wished to have resolved prior to their official participation:

- relocation of the offices of the MBMF from the premises of the Pine Falls Paper Company so as to indicate its independence from the Company
- down-sizing of the Board of Directors to reflect the First Nation position of 50% plus 1 seats

- establishment of community awareness programs
- definition of partnership: What does this mean?
- moratorium on model forest expenditures for Phase II until First Nations are officially involved.

It was noted that a proposal embodying these points was to be presented to the Board of Directors of the MBMF at its meeting early in 1998. The position of the Board of Directors in relation to each of these issues is as follows:

- subject to First Nation participation, a Committee of the Board has been proposed to investigate relocation of the office
- eight seats for First Nations, excluding two seats assigned to the Métis People, from within the current 30 available seats on the Board of Directors
- the Board of Directors sees itself as a group of several partners rather than a board divided between two groups
- funding for community awareness is already in place
- no implementation of projects on First Nations territory without prior consultation.

Nevertheless, First Nations would like to retain the four seats allocated to them but proposed a reduction in the number of Board Members. Negotiation and consultations are ongoing.

A number of considerations, including the following, have contributed to the entrenchment of the position of First Nations on the issue of the Board's structure:

Misconception of the mandate of the model forest

First Nations would have benefited from having the mandate, purpose, goals and objectives of the model forest adequately conveyed to them in the formative stages in 1992. That is to say: the model forest did not have a jurisdictional mandate to manage the forest resource, and participation in the model forest in no way implies the derivation or exercise of power over the process of decision-making with respect to forest management. The model forest is not an instrument of political power and is not intended to function as an advocacy group on behalf of any other group.

Lack of communication between the MBMF Board of Directors and First Nations

It does not seem that First Nations were fully aware of the implications of federal cutbacks to the budget proposed in the original funding proposal of the ten model forests, nor what this meant to the initiatives they sought to have implemented on behalf of First Nations. This lack of communication has resulted in a heightening of the distrust and lack of confidence that First Nations have long held towards government programs. This lack of communication was a direct result of the unwillingness of the major First Nations to talk with the Board of Directors unless their demands for control of the Board were first met.

Source of model forest funding

There exists a perception that the model forest is an agency of government inasmuch as it obtains its initial finances from government. This perception has brought into play unresolved land claims and other disputes between First Nations and government. As a result of this perception, First Nation leaders wished to distance themselves from the model forest as a form of protest.

Location of model forest office

There is also a perception that the model forest office, located on the premises of the Pine Falls Paper Company, is not a distinct entity from that Company, which is a partner of, and is represented on, the model forest Board of Directors.

Differences have long existed between First Nations and the Pine Falls Paper Company. These were heightened by the revelations during the proceedings and report to the

Sagkeeng First Nations on the Recreational Water Quality of the Winnipeg River as prepared by the occupational and Health Services Manitoba District, Prairie Region, Health Canada (June - September 1994). In light of these long-standing differences, the location of the model forest office within those of the Pine Falls Paper Company has impacted negatively on the willingness of First Nations to participate officially in the model forest.

2) Community/Grass Roots Participation

Although First Nations have officially declined participation at the Board of Directors level, there has been consistent participation by First Nation individuals and community groups at the grassroots level.

Accomplishments, 1992-1997

Significant achievements involving First Nations in the MBMF over the period 1992-1997 include the following:

- **Sponsorship and development by the model forest of a Conference on *"The Role of First Nations in Forest Management"* at Hollow Water First Nation.**

- **The Wasaanebe-Shining Waters Heritage Regional Project**

  In 1994, the Economic Development and Diversification Working Group of the model forest established this heritage region within the model forest area. It involved some 21 municipalities including four (4) First Nation and four (4) Métis Settlements. This project seeks to create a better understanding within the model forest of its people, their history and culture. It also seeks to help communities work together in pursuing common goals, such as promoting and preserving heritage sites for the development of tourism.

With funding support of $218,600 from the MBMF during 1994-1997, this project accomplished the following:

- establishment of the Wasaanebe-Shining Waters Heritage Region
- management of cross-cultural workshops involving people in the various communities
- establishment and consolidation of inter-community understanding and communication
- creation of a forum where community members could discuss common problems and approaches
- building bridges and other linkages between communities
- establishment of a local Arts and Crafts Cooperative
- transcription and interpretation of First Nation oral histories about the Region through retention of the services of an Ojibway speaker-interviewer
- feasibility study on the old Pinawa Heritage Park
- creation of 8,000 local placemats depicting community events and information on Heritage Region projects
- identification and development of opportunities for local economic development and eco-tourism and spin-off economic ventures
- diversification of economic activities in the Region and enhancement of inter-community co-operation.

Sacred Forest Oral History

This initiative achieved the following objectives:

- development of a data management system on traditional ecological knowledge
- involvement of community members in the collection of First Nation traditional ecological knowledge
- encouragement of the expression of traditional ecological knowledge through visual and performing arts
- recording of the experiences, knowledge and legends of First Nation Elders within the boreal forest
- better understanding of the holistic approach, perspective, values and uses of the forest resource from a First Nation perspective.

The Manigotagan River Waterway Trail Project

This project also sought to provide Elders and selected members of the Hollow Water First Nation, Seymourville and Manigotagan Métis communities with an opportunity to assist in the identification and recording of some of the heritage of their area. Eight First Nation Leaders, including Elders of the Manigotagan community, were hired to provide interpretive information for a brochure. The results of this waterway survey indicate the need for a more thorough archaeological survey of this area, which is a natural for its high recreational value and use.

Manigotogan River Waterway Trail Field Research

Traditional Bush Skills/ Outdoor Youth Education

This project provided some twenty (20) First Nation youth aged 7 to 14 years from four communities in the model forest area with training in bush survival skills and traditional knowledge and teaching. Elders from these communities joined the youth camps and participated in teaching their experiences and imparting their knowledge and skills to the youth groups in bush survival and basic introduction to traditional teachings. Participants considered this to be a positive learning experience.

Sagkeeng First Nation Cultural Centre

Seed funding was provided by the MBMF to enable the Sagkeeng First Nations to undertake a feasibility study and develop a strategic business plan for its proposed First Nations Cultural Centre at Fort Alexander. This funding was intended to enable the Sagkeeng First Nations to commence its planning and development process, as well as to move the Centre along from this proposal to the reality stage. Supplementary funding for this initiative was to be sought from other sources.

GPS/GIS Workshops

The MBMF funded and developed Global Positioning System (GPS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) workshops in a number of First Nation and other communities in the model forest area in 1994. These communities included Sagkeeng First Nation, Hollow Water First Nation, Wanipagow and Pine Falls. At these workshops participants were trained in the most advanced mapping and navigational GPS technology. Participants were also trained to navigate and map using GPS receivers and process GPS data with mapping and GIS software. These workshops have been so successful that

requests have also been received for additional workshops well beyond the model forest boundaries.

Co-operative Moose Management

This project aided in developing consensus between stakeholders who sought to integrate traditional First Nation beliefs, current rights and non-First Nation views into a common vision for moose management in the model forest area. The participation of stakeholders, including First Nations in this project entailed implications for resource managers, public agencies that are responsible for the management of moose and for the development of forest harvesting, renewal plans and strategic development processes.

Student Exchange Initiative

This project sought to promote better understanding among students of different cultures, to learn more about the forest and to produce a video of their experiences in this project. Its specific objectives were to appreciate and promote different cultural perspectives; share their history, traditions and perspectives; develop urban/rural linkages; promote and enhance greater First Nation participation in the activities of the MBMF; and gain practical knowledge and skills in the use of video as a communications and teaching tool.

Program Gaps and Opportunities

An important challenge the MBMF has to face in Phase II of its program is to achieve official First Nation participation in the model forest, particularly at the level of the Board of Directors and on its Advisory Committees. This was an overall gap in the Program during the period 1992-1997 for reasons explained earlier in this report. This did not, however, seriously deter the participation of First Nations in the activities of the model forest at the community or grassroots levels. These include such projects as the Sacred Forest Oral History Project, the Manigotagan River Waterway Project, the Traditional Bush Skills Project, the Sagkeeng First Nation Cultural Project, GPS/GIS Workshops, the Co-operative Moose Management Project, and the Student Exchange Initiative. In fact, the achievements of the MBMF, despite the official position of non-participation of First Nation governments, have been quite remarkable.

The MBMF has had significant accomplishments in identifying the major factors and processes in the ecological dimension of sustainable development. It was due to the lack of official participation of First Nation governments that the achievements in the ecological dimension do not parallel those in the social and economic dimensions of the MBMF area. This has limited progress towards sustainable forest development, and has provided a substantial opportunity for the MBMF to sponsor a variety of economic and social development projects in support of First Nations. The Board of Directors seems sympathetic to circumstances of First Nations in the model forest area and has gone a long way in entertaining the proposals submitted by the official leadership of First Nations. The opportunity exists for First Nations to identify and develop a prioritized list of projects of their choice for funding support from the model forest. This is contingent on their official participation in Phase II of Canada's Model Forest Program. In this connection, the MBMF has already developed a First Nation involvement plan as part of its Phase II Proposal.

Prince Albert Model Forest

The high degree of First Nation participation in the Prince Albert Model Forest (PAMF) is attributable to the foresight, persistence, sense of realism, perseverence, belief in the merits of a partnership, and optimism of the leadership of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nation (FSIN), the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC), the Montreal Lake Cree Nation, and in particular of Gene Kimbley, who is now Chairman of the newly formed Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative. In fact, the Montreal Lake Cree Nation, with the support of the FSIN and the PAGC, was the first among the original seven Prince Albert Model Forest partner organizations to sponsor a research proposal to have the model forest fund a number of initiatives in the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. This research was a priority for this First Nation. Participation by this First Nation in the model forest was at the following levels:

1) Board of Directors

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nation, the Prince Albert Grand Council and the Montreal Lake Cree Nation are represented on the Board of Directors of the PAMF. These three organizations represent the majority of permanent residents in the model forest area. Each of these organizations has one seat on the seven member Board, or 43% of the votes. They were also among the original seven signatories of the model forest proposal and agreement. Two of these First Nation representatives have served as Chairs of the Board. The Lac la Ronge Indian Band, which contributed to the development of the original proposal, was not involved in the implementation of Phase I owing to the concern that participation could compromise its ongoing land claim negotiations.

2) Technical and Other Committees

First Nations are represented on the Board's technical and other committees, which provide an advisory function to the Board of Directors on a wide range of development issues and problems.

3) Community or Grassroots Level

The research activities undertaken by the model forest provided training and summer employment for a number of First Nation youth. The research on GIS/DSS Development (10% of allocation) involved the training of First Nation students in the use of these tools in:

- scoping traditional land use areas
- identifying existing land use
- examining options for future land use and planning.

Along with the Prince Albert Grand Council and the Woodland Institute, the PAMF co-sponsored a training program for GIS Literacy for First Nations that trained First Nation youth in GIS technology.

Moreover, First Nation communities in the model forest area participated fully in several of the economic, socio-cultural and ecological research activities funded by the model forest.

4) Funding of First Nation Initiatives

The PAMF allocated almost $592,000 or 13% of its 1992-1997 allocation for economic and social research involving First Nations. This initiative resulted in some fourteen (14) separate research reports, which focused on the depiction of the historical-cultural natural resources of the region, archaeological predictive modelling, assessment of impacts of changes in resource use on First Nation communities, socio-economic profiles of First Nation persons on and off reserve, wilderness valuation and use, and identification of opportunities for employment and income and economic development for the

Montreal Lake Cree Nation. The success of the research entailed considerable participation, effort, support and encouragement by the Montreal Lake Cree Nation and other groups at the grassroots or community level. In fact, had it not been for the commitment and support of First Nations, the level of success in the completion of this research would not have been possible.

Accomplishments, 1992-1997

Direct and indirect participation by First Nations in the PAMF has resulted in the following singular accomplishments:

Creation of a Partnership and a Forum for Dialogue

An important accomplishment of the PAMF is the creation of a forum for dialogue and accommodation among partners who have not previously had a track record in working together. In fact, the PAMF was effective in bringing to the table stakeholders who have had a history of unfriendliness, mistrust and acrimony. Through working together on the model forest Board of Directors, the partners have realized and tested their ability and willingness to make joint decisions in the common interest. This willingness of working together exemplifies the motto of the PAMF: "Ma Maw Wechehetowin," which is the Cree expression for "working together/helping each other."

Development of Comprehensive Knowledge Base

The PAMF realized that a prerequisite to the establishment of an effective sustainable development regime is the creation of a solid and comprehensive knowledge base in the ecological, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. The scarcity of up-to-date information and the existence of knowledge gaps in these three dimensions motivated the Board of Directors to implement an in-depth ecological, economic and social research program. In fact, the knowledge base that has emerged from the research program in "the model forest area is now one of the best in the province of Saskatchewan with respect to inventory and database" (SERM, 1997). The research results provide the building blocks for a sustainable development regime.

Perception of the Model Forest Initiative

First Nations that participated in the PAMF have had a good understanding of the mandate, intent, purpose and concept of the model forest. They did not perceive any hidden political agenda, basis for skepticism or mistrust in participating in the Program. The transparency and openness of operational procedures and principles of the model forest helped to diffuse the mistrust and apprehension that have historically prevailed amongst the partners. This promoted a spirit of understanding, appreciation and accommodation of each other's perspectives, goals and aspirations. In fact, the Board of Directors has not had to rely on a dispute resolution mechanism to resolve differences among partners.

Inter-partnership Solidarity

The model forest forum has culminated in the development of a solid relationship among the various members of the partnership. First Nations have recognized the need for responsible stewardship of the forest resource in response to economic necessity. Improved relations between Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd., the Montreal Lake Cree Nation, the Prince Albert Grand Council and the FSIN as members of the Board of Directors, for example, have resulted in First Nations securing improved harvesting, tree thinning and planting contracts with Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd. Moreover, this partnership has contributed to the development of an estimated $22.5 million sawmill joint venture near Prince Albert involving Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd., the Woodland Cree First Nation of Montreal Lake Cree Nation, Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and Lac la Ronge Indian Band. The Woodland Cree First Nation and the Saskatchewan Division of Weyerhaeuser Canada have jointly formed an independent company, Wapawekka Lumber Ltd., to build and operate a sawmill in early 1999. It is projected

that the new sawmill will create some forty (40) direct jobs, of which a significant portion will be filled by First Nation people. Moreover, it is anticipated that there will be more employment opportunities in forestry operations and trucking.

Other accomplishments of the partnership through dialogue are the improvements that have been possible between First Nations and the forest industry on the issue of First Nation access to timber resources. First Nations and private sector firms have been able to make tangible progress on a resolution of the issue of resource depletion and have enhanced local employment in the forest industry. According to industry sources, there has been a more than five-fold increase in the wood harvesting contracts awarded to First Nations, which have increased from 27,000 cubic metres of wood in 1992 to 144,000 cubic metres in 1995.

N.S. Aktanko (left) of Russian Nanai, Gene Kimbley, President of PAMF, and Alphonse Bird of PAGC.

Commitment to Sustainable Development

Resentment and mistrust have long prevailed between the Montreal Lake Cree Nation and the Prince Albert National Park. Montreal Lake Cree Nation has historically viewed the Prince Albert National Park as being part of its traditional land use area, from which it has been removed. However, despite this long-standing, unresolved issue, both partners, working together, have been committed to the principle of sustainable development. Through dialogue and accommodation, they have since taken symbolic actions to demonstrate their commitment to the establishment of constructive dialogue on this historic issue, and to pursue means of creating employment and income for First Nation people in the Prince Albert National Park. In fact, dialogue and improved relations between the Montreal Lake Cree Nation and Prince Albert National Park have led to discussion between the partners on the reference to Grey Owl as a promotional figure for the Park. This also portrays the history of First Nations in Prince Albert National Park, as part of its traditional land use area.

Recognition of First Nation Values

The partnership recognizes that First Nation communities probably have the widest range of values and uses of the forest resource. Their direct involvement in the model forest arises, in part, from a genuine desire, through inter-partnership relations, to protect their traditional values and uses, and vision to safeguard their inherent rights to adequate access to forest resources off and on Reserve as a major constraint to the development of the First Nation forest sector. Furthermore, they aspire, through participation, to assume a greater role in the forest decision-making process.

International Relationships Among First Nations

Through Canada's Model Forest Program, the Montreal Lake Cree Nation, together with the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation of Prince George, has extended the sphere of aboriginal influence of the model forest concept to Russia. This initiative has resulted in the establishment of an economic, social and cultural cooperation protocol between the Montreal Lake Cree Nation, the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation of British Columbia and the Nanai First Nation of Far Eastern Russia.

Among the other accomplishments of the PAMF during Phase I are the following:

First Nation Student Employment, Training and Education

- GIS Literacy in First Nation Communities
- First Nation Summer Student Program sponsored by the Government of Canada
- Archaeological dig

  The PAMF, Prince Albert National Park and the Montreal Lake Cree Nation jointly participated in an archaeological

dig at Kapasiwin, north of Waskesiu in Prince Albert National Park. This summer project employed approximately six Montreal Lake students and provided valuable information about early First Nation history in the area.

- Development of First Nation educational materials
- First Nation School Tours
- Video

  A nationally televised video on "Rhythms of Nature," produced by King Motion Pictures and narrated by Gordon Tootoosis, has been made with support from the model forest. This video talks about different types of ecological areas in North America and the relationship local people have with the land.

Program Gaps and Opportunities

The PAMF has probably achieved the highest degree of First Nation participation among the ten model forests. Phase I of its program was viewed as its developmental phase. As is the case with most initial developmental initiatives of this nature, there have emerged, based on the results of the initial phase, program gaps and new opportunities for First Nation participation that could be addressed in the Program's second phase. These program opportunities and gaps are as follows:

Extension of Socio-Economic Research Program

Now that the Lac la Ronge Indian Band is participating in Phase II of Canada's Model Forest Program, an opportunity exists for the PAMF to expand First Nation participation in its activities. An opportunity exists, therefore, for the model forest to expand its socio-economic research program to include the Lac la Ronge Indian Band. This would establish a more comprehensive assessment of the circumstances and prospects of First Nations in the model forest area.

Transformation of Research Results

The transformation of research results from the three (3) dimensions of sustainable development into user-friendly forms in order that their significance could better be appreciated by First Nations. This would enhance the appreciation of First Nation traditional ecological knowledge with modern scientific knowledge derived from modern ecological, economic and social research and their integration in the decision-making process. This would serve to enhance positively the public image of forest resource management.

Identification of Local Criteria and Performance Indicators

During Phase I, PAMF reviewed the criteria and performance indicators identified by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM) and selected some local performance indicators. In fact, various partners are developing criteria and performance indicators of sustainable forest management within their respective organizations. An opportunity now exists for the model forest to develop, in full collaboration with First Nations, local criteria and performance indicators that reflect the unique values, bonds, traditions, perspectives and aspirations of First Nations. Moreover, there is a need to harmonize and integrate the various criteria and indicators identified by the partners in their respective organizations. This opportunity also challenges the model forest to develop a working system for the practical application of the criteria and indicators, as well as for the joint monitoring, recording and monitoring of progress towards sustainable development.

Addressing the Constraints to Development

First Nations seek, as a matter of policy, to increase both the volume of wood they produce and their participation in higher value-added processing and manufacturing of forest products. In this endeavour First Nations have to overcome the following difficult barriers:

- limited access to timber
- inadequate training and skill development

- little or no access to markets for value-added forest based timber and non-timber products
- limited access to capital resources
- limited opportunities for aboriginal entrepreneurial development.

There is an opportunity for the PAMF partners, the Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative and First Nations to undertake special projects that would assist First Nations in overcoming these development barriers. However, First Nations must become more involved and committed.

Economic Development Strategy

In collaboration with First Nation communities refine and implement the economic development strategies that have been designed for their communities, with a particular focus on greater First Nation participation in forest-based value-added and/or traditional economic activities.

Greater Involvement of First Nation Youth

Greater involvement of First Nation youth in all activities of the PAMF such that they could upgrade their knowledge and training and influence the development of their careers in forestry and the natural and social sciences to enhance greater community involvement in the model forest. As sustainable development involves the future productivity of the forest resource, greater involvement of First Nation youth becomes paramount.

Significance of the PAMF Program

Demonstration to First Nation communities of what the PAMF means to them in terms of:

- sharing of knowledge and research information, sharing of ecological-based knowledge
- land use planning and management
- international relationships
- community economic and social development in the context of sustainable development.

Sharing of Knowledge

Facilitation of the extension of knowledge and technology to First Nations so as to enhance greater community involvement in sustainable forest management. This also involves the exchange of knowledge and skills relative to model forest priorities and, in particular, traditional ecological knowledge.

First Nation Cultural and Spiritual Sites

The extent to which unique or significant First Nation social, cultural and/or spiritual sites are taken into account in planning for sustainable development.

Social Costs of Community Instability

An analysis of the social costs associated with community instability relative to non-sustainable resource development should be undertaken. This analysis should be extended to include the development of a mechanism whereby there will exist greater equity in the allocation of benefits and costs of resource development.

Foothills Model Forest

The Foothills Model Forest (FHMF) covers an area of some 2.5 million hectares in west central Alberta. It includes Jasper National Park, William A. Switzer Provincial Park, Weldwood of Canada Ltd. (Hinton Division) Forest Management Agreement area, and a number of Crown Management Units. It is the largest in the Canadian Model Forest Network. The mission of this model forest is to develop an approach to integrated forest resource management and sustainability through research and technology transfer developed by collaborative partnerships. Its research program examines wildlife habitat, forestry practices, watershed and fisheries habitat, use of geographic information system, eco-tourism opportunities and economic and social issues and concerns. In addition, the research program seeks to develop alternative forest management strategies and operational techniques for use by management organizations and private industry.

First Nation Participation

During Phase I of its operation, the FHMF did not have First Nation participation in its programs and activities, essentially as there was no credible and unified identifiable organized First Nation community or group within the model forest area with whom consultations could have been held regarding participation. During the second phase of its operations, however, a number of initiatives that are independent of the FHMF are actively being pursued by different organizations of First Nation groups and communities preparatory to the participation in the programs and activities of the model forest.

In fact, under the initiative of Richard LaBoucane, Weldwood of Canada, a number of Aboriginal Round Tables have been held since January 1998 to enhance the interactive relationship between the local aboriginal People and Weldwood of Canada Ltd. Participating in these Round Tables are the following First Nation firms, groups and communities:

- Fox Creek Development Association Ltd. - a group of First Nation entrepreneurs
- Kayas/Hinton Métis
- Hinton Friendship Centre
- Marlboro Métis Local
- Four Finds & Associates
- Small Boy's Camp
- Alexis First Nation
- Nacowinewak First Nation, and
- Chairman, Richard LaBoucane, Aboriginal Affairs Unit of Weldwood Canada Ltd.

The local population in the area is estimated at 10,000 persons, of whom 1,400 or fourteen percent (14%) represent aboriginal or First Nation peoples, the majority of whom are Métis. A good proportion of the Aboriginal People are unregistered. Members of the groups and organizations noted earlier, in particular the Nacowinewak First Nations, are reported to be seriously interested in joining the FHMF. The Fox Creek Development Association was initially a government funded initiative for job creation and training. It is an independent group of aboriginal entrepreneurs who now rely less on government funding since the main source of its income is now derived from private contractual work. This group wishes to get involved with the model forest. Opportunities exist for these aboriginal groups and peoples, when more fully organized as cohesive groups, to approach the model forest with a view to full participation.

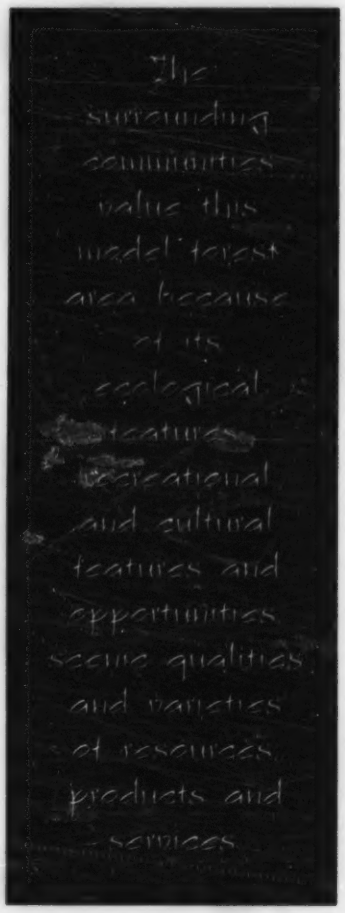
The mission of this model forest is to develop an approach to integrated forest resource management and sustainability through research and technology transfer developed by collaborative partnerships

McGregor Model Forest

McGregor Model Forest (McMF) is among the smaller model forest sites encompassing an area of some 181,000 hectares to the northeast of Prince George, British Columbia. The surrounding communities value this model forest area because of its ecological, recreational and cultural features and opportunities, scenic qualities and varieties of resources, products and services. This model forest is managed by the McGregor Model Forest Association. This association seeks to increase the ecological, social and economic understanding of the forest and to develop a decision-making support system that will further the goal of sustainable forest development.

The work program of this model forest is organized into program teams that actually do the work. These teams are as follows:

- Decision Support
- Social and Economic Trends and Analyses
- Ecological Processes
- Forest Practices
- Performance Indicators and Inventory
- Communications.


The surrounding communities value this model forest area because of its ecological features recreational and cultural features and opportunities scenic qualities and varieties of resources products and services

First Nation Participation

First Nation participation in the McMF is now in its initial stages, and the approaches to greater First Nation participation appear to be promising. The situation at this model forest is in sharp contrast to that at the Long Beach Model Forest where there is substantial First Nation participation at the grassroots or community level, but where there are claims of inadequate representation on the Board of Directors. The Lheidli T'enneh First Nation became a partner in the McMF in 1995, and Chief Barry Seymour now sits on the model forest Board of Directors. In fact, it has been pointed out that the previous Chief of this First Nation did not favour participation in the McMF program. Opportunities for First Nations to become more involved in the McMF can be initiated through the establishment of partnerships with the broad range of agencies and firms that comprise the McMF Partnership Committee. Another opportunity for greater participation involves improvement in the perception and understanding of communities, such as the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, of the purpose, aims and mandate of Canada's Model Forest Program. Greater First Nation participation would also benefit from enhanced First Nation youth involvement in the Program.

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Accomplishments, 1992-1997

From the perspective of First Nation participation in McMF, accomplishments during Phase I include the following:

International Linkages and Co-operation

The McMF and the PAMF, with a subsidiary role by the Montreal Lake Cree Nation, have entered into a twinning arrangement with the Gassinski Model Forest in Far Eastern Russia. This arrangement has resulted in the building of bridges, partnerships and relations between these three model forests. This twinning arrangement has also resulted in the development of an economic and cultural tripartite protocol that was signed in 1995 by the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation of British Columbia, the Montreal Lake Cree Nation of Saskatchewan and the Nanai First Nation of Far Eastern Russia. This protocol entails economic, cultural and social cooperation and collaboration between the peoples of these First Nations. It is understood that as a result of the protocol, the establishment of two sawmills in the Gassinski Model Forest area has been supported.

Development of Criteria and Indicators

A joint workshop between the Ecological Processes and the Forest Practices Teams was held in 1996 to identify and recommend local criteria and performance indicators of sustainable development.

Program Gaps and Opportunities

Program gaps that have been identified in Phase I of the McMF operations, and the opportunities that could be pursued in Phase II are as follows:

Validation of Criteria and Performance Indicators

The indicators that have been identified have yet to be tested, measured, monitored and interpreted. In view of the First Nations' bond to the land and its forests, and unique perspectives and values which they have long had with the forest, First Nations should first be consulted and given an opportunity to provide their inputs in the development of appropriate local level ecological, economic and social criteria and performance indicators. These should reflect their values, interests, perspectives and aspirations. An international conference on ***"Global Approaches to Sustainable Forest Management"*** was co-hosted by the McMF and the Canadian Institute of Forestry in Prince George over the period September 21-26, 1997. The Conference focussed on the topics of criteria, indicators and certification as these relate to sustainable forest management.

Level of First Nation Participation

A gap in this model forest's program is the relatively low degree of First Nation participation at the grassroots or community level in the activities of the McMF. As First Nations are part of the over-all forest landscape, sustainable development entails acknowledgement and integration of their interests, values, uses, knowledge, perspectives and aspirations in the programs and activities of this model forest. Moreover, as sustainable development also focuses on the capability of the forest resource to meet the needs of future generations, an opportunity exists for greater participation by First Nation youth and communities in the work of the model forest. Such participation would facilitate the integration of First Nation traditional ecological knowledge with the modern scientific knowledge such that forest management would benefit from the knowledge base developed in both worlds. As First Nation participation in the McMF, particularly at the community or grassroots level, is still in its early stages, several opportunities exist to stimulate and expand their participation.

Youth Involvement

In view of the futuristic dimension of sustainable development, an opportunity exists for the model forest to involve First Nation youth in its programs and projects. This would also stimulate a high degree of grassroots/community participation in the model forest.

Information Management Program

The McMF Association, together with the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation and support from the Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative, can work jointly to develop and implement projects that are consistent with the perspectives, needs and aspirations of First Nations and the McMF Association. For example, the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation has exceeded its capacity to meet its demand for access and use of cultural, archaeological, natural resource (fisheries, forestry and mining) information. In view of this, an opportunity exists for the model forest to assist this First Nation to meet its needs for an extended information management system.

Land Use Management

The Lheidli T'enneh First Nation is now involved in negotiations on its claim of some 1.4 million hectares of land that stretches from Prince George to the Alberta border. Chief Barry Seymour anticipates that this land claim will be concluded within the next four (4) years. In the event that this expectation is realized, the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation will require technical support and capability in developing a sustainable land use and management strategic plan. This provides a new opportunity for the model forest to assist this First Nation in the strategic planning for its new land use area. This would also enrich First Nation participation in the programs of the model forest.

Socio-Economic Circumstances and Development Strategy

In light of the economic and social disparities that prevail between First Nation and non-First Nation communities in the region, the model forest has an opportunity to sponsor and support initiatives that would identify the extent of these disparities and to identify an economic and social development strategy that would contribute to the improvement in the socio-economic conditions of First Nations.

Long Beach Model Forest

The Long Beach Model Forest Society, which is the parent body of the Long Beach Model forest (LBMF), was incorporated under the Society Act of British Columbia on September 12, 1994. Included in the Society are the Hesquiaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Ahousaht, Ucluelet and Toquaht First Nations, which are represented on the Board of Directors through the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council. LBMF consists of an area of 400,000 hectares of land. The Society also embraces the District of Tofino, the District of Ucluelet, and the Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot, International Forest Products Limited, MacMillan Bloedel Ltd. and the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve. In large measure, the model forest has two main cultural groups: First Nations who account for about one half of the population, and non-First Nations who constitute the other half.

Prior to the commencement of operations, a number of outstanding issues had to be resolved preparatory to First Nation participation in the model forest. Firstly, the First Nations were preoccupied with negotiations on an Interim Measures Agreement, which was first signed on March 19, 1994. This Agreement sought to ensure that, as treaty negotiations proceed, the interests of First Nations were safeguarded by an Interim Measures Agreement between the Government of British Columbia and the Central Region First Nation of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council. This Agreement was extended on April 29, 1996 for a further three (3) years as the Interim Measures Extension Agreement, the purpose of which is to protect and balance the interests of both parties to the Agreement in land and resource uses. It provides for the joint management of land and resource use in Clayoquot Sound until the conclusion of treaty negotiations. This was accomplished through the establishment of a joint management board, the Central Regional Board, which includes representatives from the Central Region First Nation and the provincial government.

Secondly, there were concerns about equity and fairness in representation on the Board of Directors. Thirdly, the Board had to address the need of developing a model participatory process that represented the interests of all participants. Fourthly, there was the challenge of structuring the model forest such that the values of First Nation and other public and private sector interests would be represented. Finally, the resolution of the public controversy about forest practices at Clayoquot Sound.

The approach taken in resolving some of these issues involved the creation of a fourteen member Board of Directors. Each stakeholder sector appoints one Director and an alternate to represent its interests on the Board of Directors. The Board plans the mission, vision and objectives of the model forest and has adopted an operational philosophy of shared decision-making and consensus in approving the programs and activities of the model forest. Under the terms of incorporation, the General Manager is the Society's Chief Executive Officer, and, as such, presides at all meetings of the Society and the Board.

The Board plans the mission, vision and objectives of the model forest and has adopted an operational philosophy of shared decision-making and consensus in approving the programs and activities of the model forest.

First Nations participate in the LBMF at the following three levels:

1) Board of Directors

Each of the five First Nations was a signatory to the Constitution and By-laws of the LBMF. The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation invited the about-to-be first Directors of the model forest to hold their initial Board meeting at Opitshat on October 5, 1993 where the incorporation documents were to be signed. This turned out to be a historically significant day as the first potential board members agreed that they could not proceed with the signing of the incorporation documents until First Nations were ready. The Board's decision to postpone the commencement of the operations of the model forest gained the respect of First Nations as it revealed its sensitivity to the circumstances of the First Nations involved in the development of the Interim Measures Agreement. Thus the model forest represents the first process in the area that recognized the importance of having First Nation governments at the table. Moreover, First Nations have one seat on the Board of Directors and the principles of the quorum require that First Nation and other governments be present for each Board decision. With encouragement of First Nations, a youth sector was also added to the Board to represent the needs and interests of future generations.

Rainforest Interpretive Centre located in Tofino, Long Beach Model Forest

2) Model Forest Staff

From the beginning of the model forest operations, the need to have balanced staffing in the administration and management of operations was clearly recognized. The emerging focus was on balancing traditional government with private industry control of forest resources. This was accomplished by modifying the general manager position to a team management approach. This approach sought to implement a co-management or team management concept that would include First Nations. Based on these criteria, a First Nation co-ordinator was hired, as well as a First Nation liaison.

3) Grassroots/Community Participation

During the first phase of its operations, the LBMF has had First Nation community support and participation in its program and activities. The Board endeavoured to involve, train and employ local First Nation people in its projects. Training was considered important as it contributed to the development of a pool of skilled local people and enhanced better understanding of resource management issues.

The Model forest has also developed a research model that: employs local people, including First Nations, at all levels; respects Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK); and embraces local First Nation ideas on what is important in research. This approach has been used as a model for community involvement by provincial and outside research agencies new to the area. The model forest also supported the development of First Nation inventories; the monitoring and review of projects, including the Hesquiaht First Nation Project Management for a Living Hesquiaht Harbour; Toquaht First Nation fish counting projects; Ahousaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Toquaht and Ucluelet First Nation cultural inventory; and mapping projects. The need is being addressed to promote the development among First Nation communities of GIS technology, skills and knowledge so that these communities can play a greater role in inventory, monitoring and review programs.

The results of a survey of views on activities of the LBMF aimed at achieving sustainable forest management reveal that First Nations

and the Provincial Government were the most influential stakeholder groups in this model forest (Sinclair, J. *et. al.*, 1998). The reasons given for the influence of First Nations are that they comprise about fifty percent (50%) of the area's population and, therefore, have "a large voice; and that they have 'status and power' such that 'through the Treaty process...control of the land could change." The influence of the Provincial Government derives from the fact that it is the "Steward and controller of the land," and has guided the process and "has acted almost like mentors." (Sinclair, J. et. al., 1998).

Accomplishments, 1994-1997

Direct and indirect participation by First Nations in the LBMF (Phase I) has contributed to the achievement of a number of major accomplishments. In fact, some Board members have classified several projects as successful. These include the Rainforest Interpretive Centre, the GIS and Mapping Project, as well as a number of scientific research projects relating to fish, amphibians and invertebrates in riparian zones (Sinclair, J. *et. al.*, 1998). A brief description of these successful projects is presented below:

1997 First Nation students working with Long Beach Model Forest Society

Rainforest Interpretive Centre

The development of this Centre has benefited from an in-kind contribution from the MacMillan Bloedel forest company as a permanent location to house displays and educational materials. It also functions as a venue for interpretive events, lectures and workshops. It has now become a public forum for meetings and workshops held by community groups, government bodies and other members of the communities. It limits its public use to resource sustainability and educational themes so as to preserve its use as an educational facility. The Centre represents the first visible achievement of the model forest, acts as an interface between the model forest and the communities, and enhances the "public persona" of the LBMF. In its 17 months of operations, the Centre has hosted some 23,000 visitors and has delivered educational/school programs to 2,000 students. Reasons identified for the success of this project include the contributions of the Centre: in raising the profile of the model forest, creating public awareness about the natural forest and related forestry issues, and disseminating information into surrounding communities regarding educational links forged with schools and their science programs (Sinclair, J. *et. al.*, 1998). Some concern was expressed, however, about its origin as MacMillan Bloedel's Forestry Information Centre.

GIS and Mapping Project

LBMF has been quite successful in its work with most communities in the region in promoting GIS technology and skills. It has assisted in establishing software and hardware systems for GIS and data management in Ucluelet, Toquaht, Ahouaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, and Hesquiaht First Nation communities. This project is of high quality and enhances the process of enabling communities to conduct successful projects. The LBMF has also collaborated with each community in preparing and implementing training programs for local people to learn system operations, data maintenance information analysis and presentation, co-ordinating data acquisition and sharing among the communities'

GIS offices, and in promoting data management capabilities of local GIS systems to researchers and consultants who are conducting inventories in the region. GIS community systems are now being used to digitize cultural, historical and resource data collected by local communities. They are also being used to analyze historical and current land use in the region and to review future land use and management options.

Blair Lucas, Hesquiaht Rediscovery youth camp dancer (Photo: Norma Dryden)

Youth Camps for First Nation Communities

Identified among the successful First Nation initiatives is the Rediscovery program for aboriginal communities. This initiative was established in 1994 and reflects part of the First Nation communities' concern for their youth. It is part of Rediscovery International, of which the parent organization was founded in Victoria, British Columbia in 1986. This initiative seeks to re-establish the connection between young people, especially First Nation youth, and their natural environment and traditions.

With organizations in several countries, the directors of Rediscovery International are mainly First Nation people whose Elders teach their youth traditional methods of carving and weaving, provide guidance and answers to questions. Rediscovery International also organizes training programs for camp leaders in such skills as counselling, camping, canoeing, camp management and first aid. Camp activities include such development skills as self-reliance, self-esteem, individual expression, personal achievement and concern for others.

These rediscovery initiatives have been quite successful at LBMF where solid support for these camps has been provided by the LBMF Society through funding and staff participation in a science focused program. For example, the Hesquiaht Rediscovery Program held its first registered camp in August 1994 in which over sixty (60) young people participated. This was followed in 1995 by three camps in which some seventy five (75) First Nations were involved and approximately one hundred (100) youths participated in the final ceremony.

LBMF, in partnership with Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council, developed four science camps for youth that included 80 young people educated on the importance of science, including knowledge and understanding of forests and ocean environments, in their lives. The program presented both traditional and scientific knowledge as equally valid approaches to learning. Elders and scientists were involved in several aspects of the camps, and students were encouraged to consider science as a career. As a follow-up to this camp, LBMF staff are working with Nuu-Chah-Nulth educators to develop a science curriculum.

Salmon Enhancement Stream Clearing and Fish Habitat Restoration Projects

The model forest has assisted in the implementation of several restoration projects that include the following: stream restoration, fish counts and monitoring, training, and salmon enhancement. From the perspectives of the communities, the value of these projects lies in the fact that they have helped to rehabilitate depleted stocks, monitor watersheds, and understand terrestrial - aquatic interface. In this connection, the model forest has provided funding to the following: Thornton Creek

Enhancement Society, Kennedy Watershed Restoration Project, Tofino Salmon Enhancement Society, Ahousaht First Nation, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, Hesquiaht First Nation, and the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council Fisheries Program. The success of these projects relates to both the information base generated and its practical application.

First Nation Youth Participation and Student Programs

A unique achievement of the LBMF is its ability and success in incorporating youth involvement in most activities of the model forest. Youths are represented on the Board of Directors and have the same decision-making powers as other directors. It has been noted that: "The youth sector at LBMF is unique among the model forests. It represents a wide cross-section of ages, social groups and belief systems. They bring to the model forest process a concern for the future and contribute communications, social, technical and most importantly, computer skills" (Gardner Pinfold, 1996).[11]

Opportunities for Communication Between Different Cultural Groups

The model forest has created a forum whereby people of different community and cultural backgrounds, values, interests, perspectives, aspirations and sectors can communicate on a wide range of resource sustainability issues in the region. It has, therefore, constituted a forum that has fostered more communication between the various industry sectors. This has been accomplished through dialogue among members of the Board of Directors, partnerships supported by the model forest, and specific projects undertaken by the model forest.

Community Participation, Training and Employment Projects

These projects contribute to the development of a local pool of skilled labour and thereby increases local understanding and appreciation of forest management issues.

Integration of First Nation Values and Interests

The Long Beach Model Forest's programs seek to ensure that the values, benefits, uses and interests of First Nations are fully integrated in the forest management decision-making process. The bi-cultural focus of these programs endeavours to develop and strengthen bridges between First Nation and non-First Nation groups in the region.

In addition, there has been a significant presence in the public image and presentations of the model forest throughout the world. There has also been a marked resurgence of interest amongst First Nation youth in their cultural background (Gardner Pinfold, 1996).[12]

Supporting traditional craftsmanship with Tla-o-qui-aht canoe carving project

World Wide Web Site

An award winning world wide web home page was developed for the model forest by LBMF's Youth Director, Rob Healy and First Nation GIS intern, Jason Valentine. Both were LBMF area students. This home page has reached a large audience via the Internet and has shared the objectives and achievements of the model forest locally, nationally and internationally. This home page and server were the first to be developed on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. They enable the model forest to provide Internet descriptions to Society members and affiliates, enhancing communications between partners, communities and the model forest. On average, the LBMF receives some 500 visitors to its web site monthly.

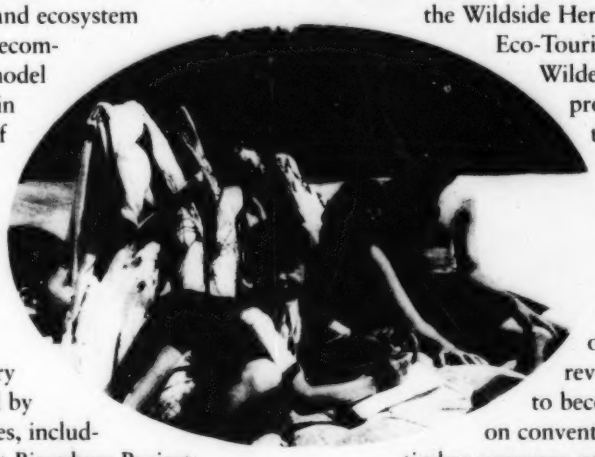
11 *Op. Cit.*, p. 75.

12 Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., ***Final Report of the National Advisory Committee of the Evaluation of the Model Forest Program,*** Natural Resources Canada, Ottawa, 1996.

Research Studies

In 1995, the Scientific Panel Report on Sustainable Forest Practices had recommended the collection of baseline data on biological diversity in watersheds of Clayoquot Sound before land-use practices were decided. During Phase I of the model forest operations, an ecological needs assessment survey indicated that major gaps existed in the understanding of: natural bio-diversity, ecological processes, and ecosystem dynamics. It was recommended that the model forest collaborate in the development of comprehensive field inventories and studies of key species that could serve as bio-indicators. The model forest supported inventory projects conducted by several communities, including: the Clayoquot Biosphere Project, the Hesquiaht Living Harbour Database, Thornton Creek Enhancement Society, River Watershed Research, and Hesquiaht Sea Urchin Management project. The model forest also assisted in building data management capabilities in community GIS systems.

In partnership with Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council, LBMF designed and delivered science camps to 80 area students



Value Added Processing/Manufacturing

During Phase I of its operations, the LBMF provided support to the West Coast Value-Added Wood Inventory Association in its endeavour to identify and expand value-added opportunities in local communities. According to reports from local communities, the three key components that initiated this endeavour to develop the Association were the Value-Added Sustainable Development Strategy (Greer), Value-Added Manufacturing (Banke) and the focus on development of Value-Added Processing/Manufacturing by the LBMF.

Non-Timber Community Initiatives

The non-timber values and uses associated with the forest are ecotourism, fish habitat, air quality, clean water, tourism, gathering, recreation, etc. During the initial phase of its operations, the LBMF provided funding support to a number of community projects that sought to capitalize on those non-timber forest values and uses. Among these were the Tla-o-qui-aht Canoe Carving Project, the Wildside Heritage Trail and Eco-Tourism Project, the Wilderness Initiation program for Women, the Hesquiaht Cedar Bark Project, and the West Coast Sustainability Association. Research on the economic needs of the LBMF area revealed the need to become less dependent on conventional timber resources without overexpansion into tourism.

Communications

This has been a key component of all programs of the LBMF, which has developed an extensive communications program in Phase I. This model forest has hosted several national and international groups to the area, including those from Finland, Norway, India, Thailand and Indonesia. It has also maintained linkages with model forests Adaptive Management Areas in the United States Pacific Northwest and active model forest sites in Mexico and proposed sites in Japan.

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Program Gaps and Opportunities

The gaps and opportunities that have been identified in Phase I and that could be accommodated in Phase II of this model forest's program include the following:

Programming

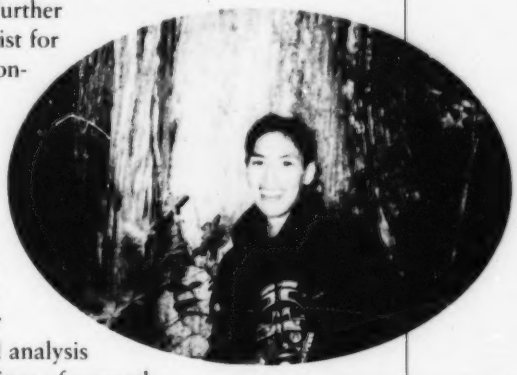
Although the model forest did not commence operations until 1994-1995, its research initiatives in the ecological dimension of sustainable development provide solid building blocks for the creation of a sustainable development regime that meets the needs of the area. An opportunity now exists for the model forest to undertake more complementary and concurrent initiatives in the economic and social dimension of the region so as to complement the knowledge base developed in the ecological dimension of sustainable development. The work on the ***"Assessment of Economic Needs and Socio-Economic Impacts on the Transition to Sustainable Development in Small Communities"*** represents a good illustration of the specific type of research required in the economic and social dimensions. This is of interest as unemployment is of some concern, particularly among First Nations.

Refinement of Criteria and Performance Indicators

An opportunity exists for the LBMF to pursue the identification and development of criteria and performance indicators of progress towards sustainable development. In view of their unique bond, perspective and values, First Nation's concurrence should be sought on the validity of these criteria and performance indicators.

New Initiatives

This would involve support for First Nation initiatives to develop inventories and monitor forest resources that are important to them, conduct analysis and develop criteria and local level performance indicators for sustainable development that are relevant to First Nations. Further opportunities exist for the LBMF to sponsor and provide support for the following specific new initiatives:



Travis Thomas by a culturally modified tree in the Atleo River Valley

- implementation of a process for review and analysis of the findings of research projects and other initiatives when completed in order to enhance their application, appropriateness and utility
- development of a framework for integrating traditional ecological knowledge with contemporary scientific knowledge
- documentation of traditional aboriginal ecological knowledge on animal and plant species within the model forest area
- identification of timber and non-timber resources that could contribute to industrial diversification in the LBMF area through higher value-added production and processing
- development of an economic and social profile of First Nation communities in the area
- development of a socio-economic strategy for First Nations
- identification of job opportunities for First Nations beyond initial training where provided.

Residual Issues

A number of non-program residual issues that are of priority concern to First Nations and others continue to face the LBMF. These are as follows:

Board Structure and Decision-Making

The issues of Board representation, structure, equity, fairness and accountability are still matters of concern to First Nations and other stakeholders. There is one seat on the Board of Directors to represent the interests of five First Nations, whereas the two non-aboriginal communities of Tofino and Ucleulet together have one seat on the Board. This raises an issue of fairness and equity in representation on the Board. Moreover, at the Annual General Meeting on June 26, 1997, First Nations - through their representative – raised the following two issues:

- Fairness and equity
- Accountability of the individual directors on the Board.

An opportunity exists for improving harmony on the Board of Directors and for raising the degree of First Nation participation in the model forest. This entails a review of the Board's structure and representation.

This opportunity could be realized through *re-examining the following issues:* fairness and equity, accountability of sector Directors, and Board representation and structure.

Issues raised during the preparation of this Report relate to the Board's divergence from its original goals and the lack of a clear focus. These issues have contributed to the Board being cast in a reactive as opposed to a pro-active mode of operation. This presents a challenge to the Board's endeavour to enhance its public image. This has been an irritant to some participants and Board members as they wish to have a "stronger sense of purpose around which to focus their efforts." With a strategic plan containing specific goals, it is anticipated that the Board will work its way through these new challenges, and take advantage of the opportunities noted above.

Summary and Conclusions

The major focus of Canada's Model Forest Program in Phase I was on the demonstration and acceleration of the implementation of integrated forest resource management with sustainability as the guiding principle. Central to the success of this Program was the need to demonstrate that solid partnerships can be developed to reflect the diverse values, interests and perspectives, and to reach a consensus on goals, objectives and vision on the future of the forest. From its inception CMFP has recognized that First Nation and aboriginal communities are integral parts of the forest landscape. They have important stakes in the process of decision-making regarding the management of the forest resource in their traditional land use area that has been incorporated within the boundaries of the model forests. It was also prudent to integrate First Nation traditional ecological knowledge into the knowledge base developed by the model forests. Moreover, the concept of sustainable development requires that, in addition to ecological research, contemporary and concurrent economic and social research should also be conducted in the forest dependent communities in the model forest area. The objective was to ensure that the economic and social values, use and benefits of the forest resource could be integrated into the sustainable development equation.

Thus, the participation of First Nation and aboriginal communities in Canada's Model Forest Program has now emerged as an important consideration in its implementation. The degree of First Nation and aboriginal participation in Phase I of the Program at the various model forest sites across Canada has been summarized and laid out in Table 1. What is interesting about the Program in the various model forest sites is the diversity, variations in vision, mission statements and priorities in response to regional circumstances and perspectives. The degree of participation by First Nation and aboriginal communities varies from virtually complete (Prince Albert, Eastern Ontario and Long Beach) to no participation (Western Newfoundland, Fundy and Bas-Saint-Laurent). Moreover, during Phase II of the Program, it is anticipated that First Nation participation will emerge at the model forest sites at Manitoba, Lake Abitibi and Foothills. In addition, a new First Nation controlled model forest, the Waswanipi Cree Model Forest, has been established in northern Quebec.

What is interesting about the Program in the various model forest sites is the diversity, variations in vision, mission statements and priorities in response to regional circumstances and perspectives.

The variations in the degree of First Nation and aboriginal participation in Canada's Model Forest Program reflect the differences in the spirit of accommodation, perspectives, attitudes, apprehension and historical relationships with governments and private sector firms; understanding of the mandate and purpose of CMFP; and the extent of their perception that the model forest focuses on their interests, values and circumstances as well as their projections of the benefits of participation. Undoubtedly, the variations in participation also reflect the differences in the perception of what constitutes a valid partnership, perceptions of sustainable development, mechanisms of accountability and equity in representation on the model forest Board of Directors and Advisory Committees. Moreover, participation was dependent on the extent to which the concept of sustainable development has adequately been explained and its advantages and merits outlined and understood

from the perspectives of First Nation and aboriginal communities.

Furthermore, there appears to be a misperception among some First Nation groups that the model forest could be used as an advocate for political change. It is also perceived by others that the focus is more on development of partnerships than on changing the economic and social circumstances on the ground. Quite to the contrary, an important dimension of CMFP is to seek and advocate change through the creation of solid partnerships, accommodation and better understanding among conflicting shareholders who have previously had no track record or experience in working together. Part of the frustration that some groups entertain about the Program derives from a lack of clarity about what the model forest can do to induce change in the socio-economic conditions of First Nations. Rather, they have a perception that the model forest maintains the status quo with respect to natural resource management, and that, through their partnerships, private sector corporations seek to gain access to new timber harvesting areas. In such cases, some groups seem unwilling to "bury the hatchet" and, with some optimism, participate in the work of the model forest that, through the partnerships, could induce change in their economic and social circumstances. In fact, with the possible exception of three model forest sites, initially First Nations entertained some apprehension about Canada's Model Forest Program. This arose, in part, from the experience that they were historically not included in the forest resource decision-making process. A major challenge that CMFP faces in its second phase is undoubtedly to increase the degree of First Nation participation in the work of the model forest, particularly at those sites where there was no participation during phase I. The Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative is a useful tool in meeting the challenge. Moreover, opportunities now exist for greater involvement of First Nation youth and students in the Program in view of the futuristic dimension of sustainable development.

Nevertheless, in spite of these misgivings and misperceptions, Canada's Model Forest Program has been successful in securing the participation of First Nation and aboriginal groups in seven (7) of the ten (10) model forests across Canada during its first phase. The successes in First Nation participation derived from the changing focus in forest policy, greater acknowledgement and recognition of the Treaties and First Nation rights and a clear recognition of the equity needed in the sharing of the benefits from forest management, better recognition of First Nation values, perspectives, knowledge and aspirations, and the legitimacy of First Nation claim of the right to participate in the resource management decision-making process. It also derives from a realization by some groups that non-participation is not a logical option. The information presented in the previous section of this report shows that substantial progress and accomplishments have been achieved. As expected in programs of this scope and diversity, program gaps and new opportunities would be identified for greater participation by First Nation and other aboriginal groups. These gaps and opportunities could be incorporated and pursued in Phase II of the Program. This could be accomplished through a combination of supplementary funding support from the Enhanced Aboriginal Involvement Strategic Initiative as well as from funds provided by the Canadian Forest Service contribution agreements, partner support and direct or in-kind financial commitment by First Nation organizations or other government agencies.

Based on the experiences accumulated in the first phase of CMFP, it is evident that opportunities exist for securing a higher degree of participation by First Nation and other aboriginal groups in the work of the Program. Pursuit of this goal, however, would benefit significantly from the following considerations in dealing with First Nation and other aboriginal groups. Participation is not intended to compromise First Nation land claims as has clearly been stated in the Canada - Model Forest Contribution

Agreements. Pursuit of a higher level of participation by First Nation and other aboriginal groups should be based on mutual respect, dignity, openness and transparency of model forest operations. It requires the devotion of adequate time, patience and persistence. Moreover, it entails a demonstration of tangible benefits to be derived from participation, recognition of First Nation land claims, treaty rights and of the legitimacy of First Nation and other aboriginal communities as part of the broader forest landscape. In addition, it involves the integration of First Nation traditional knowledge, perspectives, values and aspirations in the decision-making process. The adoption of a non-adversarial approach to negotiations and discussion is of paramount importance.

During the course of this review, a number of other issues were raised. These were beyond the mandate and scope of Canada's Model Forest Program. Among these were the following:

- Settlement of outstanding First Nation land claims
- Co-management of the forest resource in traditional land use areas
- Aboriginal rights and forest policy at the ground level
- Assignment of responsibility for the forest resource management
- Role of other government departments and agencies with forestry initiatives in the implementation of Canada's Model Forest Program.

TABLE 1

FIRST NATION PARTICIPATION IN THE TEN MODEL FORESTS: PHASE I OF CANADA'S MODEL FOREST PROGRAM, 1992-1997[1]

Aspects/Dimensions of Participation / Model Forest	First Nation as Partners and Stakeholders in Model Forest	First Nation as Members of the Board of Directors	First Nation in Advisory, Technical and Other Advisory Committees	% of Phase I Budget Spent on Funding of First Nation Projects	Creation of a Solid Working Relationship involving First Nation in a Forum for Dialogue	Commitment to Sustainable Development	Recognition of First Nation Values and Uses
Western Newfoundland	■	■	■	■	■	✔	■
Fundy	■	■	■	■	■	✔	■
Bas-Saint-Laurent	■	■	■	■	■	✔	■
Eastern Ontario	✔	✔	✔	-	✔	✔	✔
Lake Abitibi	✔	✔	✔	-	✔	✔	✔
Manitoba	■	■	■	-	■	✔	✔
Prince Albert	✔	✔	✔	13%	✔	✔	✔
Foothills	■	■	■	■	■	✔	■
McGregor	✔	✔	■	-	-	✔	✔
Long Beach	✔	✔	✔	20%	✔	✔	✔

Legend: ✔ = yes; ■ = no; - data not available at time of report preparation

[1]Note: This table attempts to summarize the degree of First Nation participation in Canada's Model Forest Program at the various sites. Moreover, the data in this table reflect, signify and present a bird's eye view of the subject areas presented in the descriptive portion of the report for easy reference.

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